Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Are you looking forward to this year's holiday season?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
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51 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

U.S. Airstrike

A suspected U.S. missile attack well inside Pakistani territory Wednesday killed at least six alleged militants.

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Outback Film

Nicole Kidman says the prospect of a smooch with Hugh Jackman eased the troubles of working on "Australia."

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Josie appeals to Laura not to push marine monument. **PAGE 3**
CUC makes second $500K payment to Aggreko. **PAGE 5**

2 teens arrested in MHS murder

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

RELATED NEWS
- 'Murder of MHS security guard affects school system' **PAGE 2**

Police arrested early yesterday morning two teenagers who were allegedly involved in the killing of security guard Efren L. Ballesteros at Marianas High School in Susupe.

Assistant attorney general Rebecca Warfield told *Saipan Tribune* that the Department of Public Safety's Criminal Investigation Bureau detectives picked up the suspects: Eric Rabauliman, 18, and a 16-year-old male who has been identified as a student at MHS.

Warfield said the minor will be charged as an adult. The *Saipan Tribune* will for the moment withhold publishing the name of the 16-year-old suspect.

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DOJ and EPA file complaint against CUC

Lawsuit intended to force CUC to follow federal regulations

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- Joint briefing in NMI, Calif. on lawsuit vs CUC **PAGE 7**

By KRISTI EATON
Kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday filed a civil suit against the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to compel it to adhere to federal regulations governing water, sewer, power, and fuel.

The suit was accompanied by two stipulated orders, which means that the CNMI government agreed to the

See DOJ on Page 4

Man gives hitcher a ride, gets stabbed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A 33-year-old man was injured when a man he was giving a free ride in his car stabbed him repeatedly and took his vehicle in Chalan Kanoa Monday night, the Department of Public Safety said yesterday.

DPS acting spokesperson Police Officer 2 Jason T. Tarkong said the victim, a Chinese, suffered multiple lacerations and stab wounds on the right arm, chest, rib, and stomach.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo congratulates Delegate-elect Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan during Sablan's courtesy call at her office on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C.

Kilili upbeat about NMI-Congress relations

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delegate-elect Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan is upbeat about the Commonwealth's relationship with U.S. Congress after meeting with Rep. George Miller, a longtime advocate of labor and immigration changes in the Northern Marianas.

Sablan, who is on his first trip to Washington, D.C. since his historic election as the Commonwealth's first ever delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, said his meeting with Miller "represents

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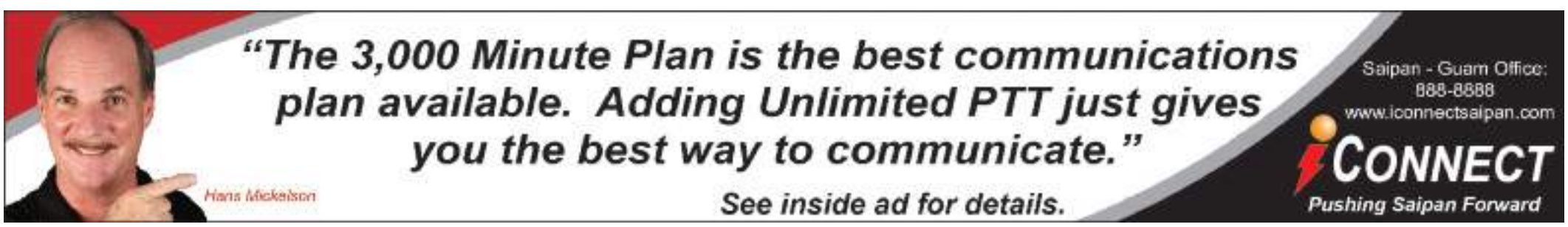
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Local

'Murder of security guard affects school system'

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The entire Public School System is impacted by Monday's murder of a security guard stationed at Marianas High School, some PSS principals said yesterday.

"To happen on a school ground, its sad. It's going to take time to heal," said Jonas Barcinas, principal at Dandan Elementary School.

Efren Ballesteros, an employee of Global Security Agency, died from head trauma inflicted sometime during late Monday or early Tuesday. Several classrooms had also been burglarized.

"It's affecting our school," said Hopwood Jr. High School principal Christine Masga. "Now our school is worried. I'm worried for our security guard. I'm worried for anybody who is going to be here late at night, it's a scary thought. It could happen to anybody."

Barcinas said the tragedy has opened everyone's mind about leaving the school campus late at night.

"Even me, as a school principal, I leave late. It scares me now," he said.

Dandan Elementary does not have a security guard because of a lack of funding, but in the past the school has worked with Global Security, Barcinas said. He said he has talked with Education Commissioner Rita Sablan about earmarking money for security guards for all schools or networking with the Department of Public Safety.

Yvonne Reyes, principal of Garapan Elementary, said her first thought upon hearing the news of Ballesteros' death was sadness.

"My initial reaction is really sadness and just sympathy for the family," she said. "My first thought that came to mind is 'did we know him?'"

GES also employs a security guard from Global Security. Reyes said.

Reyes said now is the time for PSS to evaluate the security system.

"As a system, I think there are precautions we can take administratively," she added. "I think the more important thing right now is to sit back as a system and think about the type of security at schools, in relation to the school's population."

There is one security guard at GES at night, on weekends and during the holidays. The guard monitors 38 classrooms, the main office building, the special education building and the cafeteria, Reyes said.

If there are multiple assailants, it's hard for one guard to fight back, she said.

"There's no way one person could fight off burglars, and if [the burglars are] intoxicated or on any type of substance, that's even harder to do," she said. "Maybe if there is additional funding we can allow more security at large campuses or even smaller campuses, so they can fight them off or at least call for help."

Even before the murder at MHS, Masga said she was interested in partnering a school security aide with the private company security guard during the most dangerous hours.

During the last operation pay period, Hopwood did have two security guards but had to cut back, she said. There were a lot of burglaries taking place, and the guards did help lower the crime level.

This is not the first time Masga said she has seen a school security guard hurt. Some boys beat up a security guard during last year's March Against Cancer.

It's time, Masga said, for everyone to work together to stop the crime. "We need to get to the bottom of this. The community needs to get involved," she added.

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER
October 2008 Tests Showed Coliform Bacteria in Saipan Water

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we did to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for drinking water contaminants. Throughout **October 2008**, we collected **111** water samples in Saipan to test for the presence of coliform bacteria with **nine (9)** samples or **8.11%** showing the presence of total coliform bacteria. The standard is that no more than five percent (5%) of samples may do so.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other; potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.

Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the system's treatment or distribution system (pipelines). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as fecal coliform or E. coli, are present. We did find these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.

What happened? What was done? Look below for the specific village or streets where problems occurred in **October 2008**:

- **Kagman:** (sample ID# 9A, Nika Pl.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, the water operators discovered a leak in the distribution system pipes on Kondot Ln., this may be the cause for the bacterial contamination. Currently, the water leak crew is making the necessary repairs. Upstream & downstream samples tests indicated the water to be free of both total coliform and E. coli. Chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process.
- **Kagman:** (sample ID# 10A, Hasngot Dr.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, samples were collected from a leaking tap, this may be the cause for the bacterial contamination. The leaking tap was replaced, flushed the lines and chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process.
- **San Vicente:** (sample ID# 12A, Palu Ln.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, the treatment operator discovered the chlorinator for this water supply malfunctioned. Treatment operator replaced the damaged chlorinator, flushed the lines and chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process. Repeat samples tests indicated the water to be free of both total coliform and E. coli.
- **Lower Dandan:** (sample ID# 17C, Holiday Dr.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, the water operators discovered a leak in the distribution system pipes on Holiday Dr., this may be the cause for the bacterial contamination. The water leak crew repaired the leak and chlorinators flushed the lines and chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process. Repeat samples tests indicated the water to be free of both total coliform and E. coli.
- **South San Vicente:** (sample ID# 38B, Dandan Rd. Kattan Hudda Dr.) Tests indicate that there were adequate chlorine levels in the water system; however, sample sites are in non 24-hour water service areas. Therefore, the chlorine treatment did not have enough mixing or contact time within the distribution system. Water operators flushed the lines and chlorine treatment increased for the disinfection process.

For more information, please contact CUC Water Quality Laboratory Manager, Heidi Yelin at 322-5140 or via email at: cuclabman@yahoo.com or contact CUC Water Division Manager, Mariano Iglecias at 235-7025 or via email at: miglecias@cucgov.net

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Water Division
State Water System ID #: **MP 0000001** Date Distributed: **November 20, 2008**

House calls for audit on economic impact of QC program tax breaks

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives yesterday adopted a resolution calling for an audit of the economic impact of the tax breaks issued to investors under the qualifying certificate program.

The resolution, sponsored by Rep. Ray N. Yumul, also urges the Office of the Public Auditor to assess the potential impact of approving pending applications or granting additional benefits to existing QC beneficiaries.

The resolution comes in the heels of a request from the House of Representatives for the Commonwealth Development Authority not to grant additional tax breaks to Saipan LauLau Development Inc., which recently scaled down its formerly $68.8 million construction project at LaoLao Bay Golf Resort.

Yumul, who had also penned the previous resolution, said it is necessary to find out "whether the QC program is working or not."

Several lawmakers raised concern about it. Rep. Tina Sablan, for one, said an audit may be unnecessary as CDA issued an impact report on the QC program only a year ago. She added that OPA is currently short-staffed and may not have the resources to perform the requested audit.

Rep. Diego Benavente echoed Sablan's statement, adding that OPA may not be the appropriate agency to study the multiplier effects of the QC program.

For his part, Rep. Heinz Hofschneider said the House should be careful not to send a message of "witch hunting" to investors, especially those who have availed of the incentive program.

Despite these concerns, the resolution was adopted.

According to a report that CDA released in November 2007, the QC program has attracted 11 companies, produced immediate benefits of $28.12 million from capital expenditures, and generated a total of $100.59 million in taxes, local purchases, utility payments, and other community contributions over the seven years the program has been in place.

The report did not indicate the amount of taxes waived for QC beneficiaries under the program.

Since the report was issued, CDA has approved at least one more qualifying certificate. In August 2008, CDA approved a plan to provide up to $18 million in tax relief for the LaoLao Bay Golf Resort's $68.8 million golf hotel, a complex with condominium-style apartments for golf tourists.

The QC program was established on Dec. 1, 2000. Under the program, tax benefits are given to entice businesses to put up new investments in the CNMI or to assist existing investors in expanding their operations.

DISCONNECTION NOTICE

PTI would like to remind its customers that payments not received by close of business on November 20th, will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00 p.m. on that day. To prevent temporary suspension, customers must pay their bills on or before November 20th.

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Per an earlier announcement, PTI is no longer mailing out past due notices as of 11/01/06.

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If you have questions regarding billing or service please call Customer Service at **682-4PTI (4784)** or visit our Customer Service Representatives at our Chalan Lau-Lau Office.

PTI

New law shakes up Youth Congress

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has signed into law a bill reorganizing the composition of the CNMI Youth Congress and moving the election date to allow more time for student registration.

The new law cuts out-of-school representation in the Youth Congress to one member each precinct, while making student representation proportional to the school population. Currently, Precinct 1 and Precinct 3 send three senators to the Youth Congress. Schools have one senator each regardless of student population.

The measure is seen to provide equity in the distribution of seats, and reflect the observed lack of interest among out-of-school voters in the Youth Congress elections.

The legislation also states that the annual election date should be held on the third Monday in October, instead of the third Monday in September. This is designed to offer students more time to register for elections and to collect signatures on petitions, among other organizing obligations.

Reps. Ralph Torres and Joseph Deleon Guerrero sponsored the measure. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Josie appeals to Laura not to push marine monument

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CNMI first lady Josie Fitial has urged U.S. first lady Laura Bush to appeal to the U.S. government—and to her husband, President Bush—not to designate a national marine environment in the Northern Marianas.

In a Nov. 12 letter to Mrs. Bush, Mrs. Fitial urged her federal counterpart to "let the stewardship success of the NMI, in union with the U.S., be the praiseworthy blue legacy."

At the same time, Mrs. Fitial extended again an invitation to Mrs. Bush to visit the islands.

"Your presence would complement the passion you expressed to me in wanting to gain a better understanding of NMI culture and its people," Mrs. Fitial's letter said.

The two first ladies have met previously.

Mrs. Fitial reminded Mrs. Bush that she was touched by her enthusiasm to learn more about the CNMI during their first meeting.

"A visit would satisfy that interest and could influence another of your interests, which is to designate a Marianas national marine monument and thereby redefine the destiny of our islands," Mrs. Fitial told Mrs. Bush.

President Bush is pushing for the creation of a national marine monument in the three northernmost islands of the Marianas chain, igniting strong opposition from not only the community but from the administration of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

The Carolinian Affairs Advisory Committee has also opposed to the plan. This week, the Guam Legislature adopted a resolution expressing its opposition to Bush's proposal.

"We are simple Americans, a globally responsible Commonwealth of the U.S. We honor and uphold a long tradition of coexistence with Mother Ocean. Island heritage passed down from our elders teaches us that we and nature are one," Mrs. Fitial said.

Fitial

Bush

She said this is the insight that motivates the CNMI people to follow time-tested cultural conservation practices.

She said heritage also maps out the wise strategies that have resulted in the pristine condition of CNMI's marine ecosystems—"a unique condition which brings awe to your staff."

Mrs. Fitial told Mrs. Bush that when she visits the islands "your heart will recognize that the success we have in ocean conservation is an excellent example of the international image that you want the U.S. to portray to the world in regard to exemplary ocean management."

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[PACKAGE B $95.00]
(Serves: 6 ~ 8 people)
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Cranberry Sauce
Gravy Sauce
Dinner Roll
Mash Potato
Pumpkin Pie
[A La Carte]
Roasted Turkey with Stuffing
10 - 12 lbs $30.00
22 - 24 lbs $65.00
Caesar Salad $12.00
Cheese Cake $15.00
Assorted Cookies $10.00
Pumpkin Pie 1 whole $8.00
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Thanksgiving Room Promo. 11/26 ~ 30/08
$77.00 / night for 2 with Breakfast
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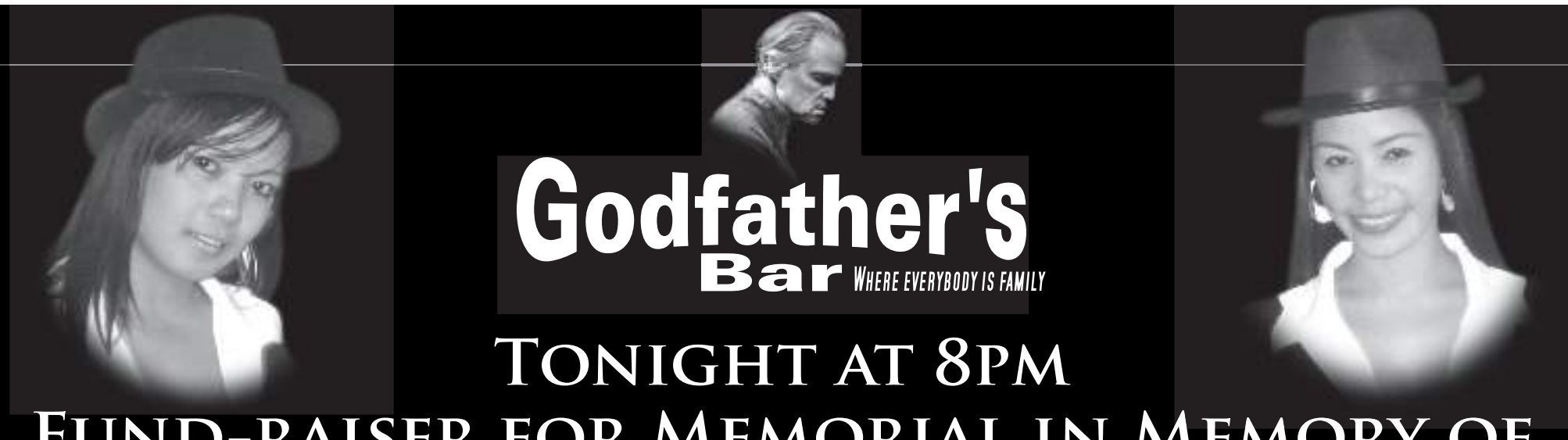

House seeks new talks with Senate on budget

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives yesterday postponed action on what is supposed to be a compromise budget bill, after lawmakers raised concern about $9.1 million worth of proposed expenditures that are not funded in the budget.

The House members agreed to open another round of talks with the Senate, which has already passed the bill, to address the unbalanced budget.

Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, during debate on the House floor, said the appropriation bill practically allows deficit spending and thus, violates both the CNMI Constitution and the Planning and Budgeting Act.

The proposed legislation, which is the product of a joint conference committee between the House and Senate, appropriates $174.47 million for government operations despite projections that the government will only have $165.37 million available.

The bill is premised on a projection that the government will collect $169.55 million in revenue from Oct. 1, 2008 to Sept. 30, 2009. Of this amount, $12.85 will go debt service and other pre-existing obligations, leaving $156.7 million available for government operations.

The bill proposes to augment this with $3.5 million from several sources from outside the general fund, and $5.17 million of "Compact Impact" funds, which is federal government's reimbursement to the Northern Marianas' for the cost of hosting citizens from Micronesia. These additional funds bring to $165.37 million the amount available for government operations in the 2009 fiscal year.

Hofschneider said the assumption that there will $156.7 million left in the general fund, after obligations are paid, may be unjustified. He said the government is not collecting that much now, evident in its failure to pay retirement contributions even at the reduced rate of 11 percent.

"Our actual resources could be below $140 million. It's time to make the real, hard choices," Hofschneider said.

Rep. Victor Hocog, co-chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said the expenditures increased because the conference committee considers it important to pay the Retirement Fund at the actuarially recommended rate and, thereby, ensure that eligible employees are able to retire. The committee also tried to accommodate the House's desire to get rid of cost-cutting measures such as austerity Fridays and unpaid holidays.

The Fitial administration on Tuesday expressed its objection to the proposed budget. "Political liability is placed entirely on the governor's shoulders," press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said. "The legislators need to identify those cuts and the governor will either approve them or reject them. But it's a delicate political problem. Again, our position has always been to balance the budget."

KILILI

From Page 1

the beginning of a new era of possibilities."

"After our meeting with Chairman George Miller and his staff, Floor Leader Joseph Camacho and I can report to the people of the CNMI that we are hopeful and confident about forging a new relationship with the Congress and the CNMI," Sablan said in a statement yesterday.

The statement adds, "Congressman Miller is a leading advocate on many of the issues that are of importance to the people of the CNMI—education, labor, the economy, and the environment. Our meeting today will be the first of many over the next two years but already I believe we have established a level of goodwill and an agreement to cooperate and work together in a way that the people of the CNMI will be proud of."

Miller holds a number of important positions in Congress. He is a member of the Democratic Leadership, serving as chairman of the House Democratic Policy Committee. He is also chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, a panel he has served on since first coming to Congress and where he served as the senior Democrat since 2001. Miller also sits on the House Natural Resources Committee, one of Congress' primary committees overseeing the environment, energy and public lands. He was chairman of that Committee from 1991 to 1994 and the senior Democrat until 2000.

In related news, Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo yesterday offered her congratulations to Sablan, who beat seven-year Washington Resident Rep. Pete A. Tenorio by 357 votes on Nov. 4.

"The election of the first Delegate from the CNMI to the U.S. House of Representatives is an important event for the people of the CNMI and our nation," Bordallo said in a statement. "I congratulate Delegate-elect Sablan and the people of the CNMI on this occasion, and I look forward to working with him when the 111th Congress is sworn in next year."

Sablan will be officially sworn into office on Jan. 6, 2009, when the House of Representatives convenes to begin the 111th Congress.

While in D.C., Sablan will attend the official orientation session for newly elected members of Congress. He will also meet with other ranking Democrats in Congress and visit with his counterparts from the other Pacific islands.

Floor Leader Camacho, one of the local Republicans who supported Sablan in his independent bid for delegate, is accompanying Sablan in his trip to the nation's capital.

In his statement, Sablan praised Camacho for "putting the needs of the people above political parties." He added, "Floor Leader Camacho's vision of a bright and prosperous CNMI is a sign of true leadership and appreciation for the needs of the CNMI people," he said.

DOJ

From Page 1

terms and conditions being required of it by the EPA. The stipulated orders need to be signed by the court.

The two stipulated orders, filed in the U.S. District Court for the NMI, seek to reform and bring into compliance CUC's wastewater plants and collection systems; public drinking water systems; five power plants; and an oil transfer pipeline.

The Justice Department complaint against CUC claims that the corporation has committed violations against the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act.

"EPA believes it is vital for CUC and CNMI to invest in infrastructure upgrades, to strengthen operation and maintenance, and to build a strong managerial and financial foundation to ensure all CNMI residents and visitors have water safe for drinking and safe for swimming," said Wayne Nastri, regional administrator for EPA's Pacific Southwest region, in a statement. " EPA will continue to oversee CUC's implementation of these required improvements to bring long-needed environmental and public health gains to the islands."

Gov. Benigno Fitial and CUC executive director Antonio Muña signed off on the stipulated orders in July. The stipulations require CUC to reorganize its managerial and operational staff; hire engineers and other environmental professionals; submit financial plans; and undertake a number of interim construction projects.

"In the past people wanted to hide from bad news," Fitial said in August. "We decided to fix the problem instead."

According to the EPA, from 2000 to 2008, CUC has repeatedly discharged wastewater from the sewage treatment plants in violation of permit limits and failed to monitor the wastewater. Also, CUC reportedly discharged treated and untreated wastewater from the Agingan and Sadog Tasi plants after the required permits expired.

"Its failure to operate the plants properly has resulted in sewer overflows, in violation of the Clean Water Act, and CUC also violated three separate EPA Administrative Orders governing operation of the plants," according to EPA.

CUC's drinking water systems on Saipan, Tinian and Rota have a long history of violating drinking water regulations, the EPA notes. The violations include exceeding safe levels of total coliform bacteria and E. coli. The presence of coliform and E. coli indicates recent contamination by human or animal wastes, and can cause gastrointestinal illness.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has also violated monitoring and reporting requirements for other drinking contaminants, according to EPA.

"Among CUC's many violations are failure to report violations to the CNMI Division of Environmental Quality, the primary enforcement authority, and failing to take required water samples for nitrates. CUC also failed to complete monitoring for lead and copper, and did not provide the public with adequate notice regarding these violations," according to the EPA.

CUC's five power plants on Saipan and Rota, along with an oil transfer pipeline on Saipan, have released harmful qualities of oil into nearby waters and shorelines. CUC has also failed to prepare and implement oil spill prevention plans, the EPA said.

Under CUC's current state of disaster emergency, Fitial directed CUC to procure the contractors needed to remove used oil from Tank 104 and 2,008 other nearby barrels, because a typhoon could cause the oil to pollute the lagoon.

MAN

From Page 1

Tarkong said police have a name and description of the suspect, but they are withholding the information pending further investigation.

Tarkong said the victim's car—a gray 1995 Toyota Tercel—was later discovered by police abandoned on Haiguas Lane in As Perdido.

DPS received a 911 call about an injured person near LJ's Market in Chalan Kanoa Monday night.

When a police officer arrived, he saw the victim lying on the ground. He was bleeding from the right arm and chest.

The victim told the officer that he gave the suspect a ride in his car from Happy Market in As Lito to Chalan Kanoa.

Upon reaching a secondary road near LJ Market in Chalan Kanoa, the suspect reached for the ignition of the car, turned the car off, and got the car keys.

The suspect then started to stab the victim. The victim managed to run away through the driver's door.

The suspect then drove off with the car.

The bloodied victim yelled out for help. Several people nearby assisted him and called the police.

Medics arrived and transported the victim to the Commonwealth Health Center where he was treated.

Tarkong did not mention the type of weapon used in the stabbing.

Tarkong said that crime scene technicians processed the victim's vehicle and secured it at DPS Central as evidence.

2 TEENS

From Page 1

She said Rabauliman and the minor were brought before Superior Court presiding judge Robert C. Naraja on charges of murder in the first degree or also felony murder.

"They committed murder while attempting to commit a felony, which is burglary and robbery," she said.

Naraja imposed no bail for each of the defendants.

Sources said investigators are looking into the involvement of another person.

Warfield said the case is still under investigation and that it could be that Rabauliman and the minor are the only people involved.

"But until we confirm that for certain, we are still continuing our investigation. We want to make sure that these are the only two people involved before the investigation is closed," she said.

Warfield said there was some physical evidence at the murder site that connected the defendants to the killing of Ballesteros.

"Subsequently they were picked up based on identification and based on that physical evidence," she said, adding that the physical evidence was recovered not at the scene but in another location.

Warfield said burglary was the motive and both defendants have already issued statements implicating themselves or suggesting that they were involved in the attack.

"Each defendant made a statement implicating himself in the attack and in the burglary and robbery. They both suggested that they both were involved in the attack," she said.

"Our position is that the defendants went there for the purpose of burglarizing the school and once there, to be able to commit the burglary they killed the security guard and robbed him as well as burglarizing the school," Warfield said.

She said they believe a blunt object was used in the attack, but that she is not prepared to release any information whether any weapon was recovered.

Warfield said the key to the early solution of the case was the very watchful eyes of a police officer.

The officer, she said, noticed something suspicious and investigated that "thing."

"The investigation continued from there and then we were able to get community involvement to assist DPS in that process," she said.

Warfield said the quick arrest of the suspects is a testament to how the police take crimes seriously and their commitment to protecting the community from violent offenders.

"I think they should be commended for being so committed and trying to resolve this ….I thank not only the criminal investigation officers but also a patrol officer who was key in making the initial observations," she added.

Ballesteros, 45, a Filipino, received massive injuries to the face and head caused by some type of blunt object or objects, according to DPS yesterday.

Police Officer 2 Jason Tarkong said Ballesteros also suffered a possible fractured skull.

Tarkong said investigators who responded to MHS Tuesday morning discovered that several classrooms had been burglarized. These included rooms 201 and 202 in Building B and the JROTC Building, he said.

Tarkong said police first received a call about a dead person at MHS on Tuesday at 6:13am. When officers arrived, they saw the body and interviewed an MHS employee, Felipe Lacey, who first saw the victim.

Tarkong said investigation showed that Lacey came to school at 6am and, as he proceeded into the campus from the main gate, he found the security guard lying face down by a concrete bench under the main entrance hallway.

Lacey then called the police.

Tarkong said initial investigation showed that Ballesteros reported to work at 6pm Monday night and that he was last seen alive by a witness at 9:15pm.

After processing the victim at the crime scene, he was transported to the Commonwealth Health Center where Dr. Gregory Kotheimer pronounced him dead at 9:35am.

Ballesteros resided in Kannat Tabla with his common-law wife and two children. He was employed with Triple K Corp., which owns Global Security Agency.

Police learned that Ballesteros had been employed with Global Security for two years now as a security guard.

CUC makes second $500K payment to Aggreko

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Although more than a month late, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has given Aggreko International their second payment for the emergency generators.

The payment was due Oct. 12, but the utility company needed to work with Aggreko on some reporting issues before the payment was made, said CUC executive director Antonio Muña yesterday.

"Like any contract, there are promises made on both sides of the equation," he said. "We have certain terms of agreements and conditions. We are addressing that. There are just some reporting issues and understanding," he said, adding that CUC has no complaints with Aggreko and that the generators have been very reliable.

Aggreko received an initial $1.5 million from CUC in August, which paid for the generators' first month of operation, lasting Sept. 12 to Oct. 11, and the last two months of the 12-month contract.

Every 28 days CUC must pay Aggreko an advanced payment of $504,000 for 15 megawatts of power.

"It's an advanced payment, so basically when you make an advanced payment you have to have some report that says they produced this much and they delivered this much and we put that on the grid," Muña said. "It's those kind of issues we need to get a few reports as to how much they consumed on a daily basis."

For the first few weeks after Sept. 12, when the majority of the generators were turned on, only 13 megawatts of power was produced. Two additional megawatts were later added to the line when those generators arrived on island.

"This is a 12-month contract, we are in need of their services, and they've been very reliable," he said. "Considering all of that, we are working with them to get the reports we need to ensure that we can liquidate the advanced payments."

Muña said the money for the payment came from revenue. The utility company will make the next payment, initially due last week, by the end of the month.

Man'amko enjoy luncheon treat from Fiesta

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Complete with music and dance entertainment, CNMI's senior citizens enjoyed a luncheon treat from Fiesta Resort and Spa yesterday at the Office on Aging.

Director Howard I. Macaranas thanked the hotel resort's management for their generosity, saying they also did this last year.

"I want to specifically extend my appreciation to the efforts of Lupe Flores, Rey Guerrero and Ms. Lou," Macaranas said.

This, he said, proves that more and more in the community are giving recognition to the *man'amko*.

"We are overwhelmed because they set up the buffet here in our center and served the food to us. It's an honest gesture on Thanksgiving Day," he said.

Fiesta Resort's general manager B.K. Park visited the center but left before lunchtime due to other commitments.

The hotel's Human Resource manager, Guadalupe Flores, received a plaque of appreciation from the Center on his behalf.

Flores said this is Fiesta Resort's way of giving back to the community.

Macaranas was assisted by Office on Aging program coordinator Walter Manglona, Man'amko Council vice chair Carmen Taitano and Man'amko Queen Rosalia Sablan in presenting the plaque to Flores.

Fiesta's Tasi band and dancers also entertained the senior citizens while they savored the buffet.

"I am extending a big thank you to the management of the hotel for recognizing the senior citizens," said Deputy Secretary Melvin O. Faisal of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

There are over 300 senior citizens on Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

Senior Citizens Federal Program Coordinator Rose Mandala said the center provides meals for a total of 194 homebound recipients and 143 who receive congregate meals.

Homebound are those who are pre-diagnosed and could not go to the center while those considered congregate are those who are active and visit the center regularly.

Fiesta Resort is the first company this year to donate an early Thanksgiving Day meal to the *man'amko*.

Saipan Grand Hotel is also scheduled to treat them to lunch on Tuesday, Nov. 25.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Fiesta Resort and Spa Human Resource manager Guadalupe Flores, right, receives a plaque of appreciation from Office on Aging director Howard I. Macaranas. Others in photo are, from left, program coordinator Walter Manglona, Man'amko Council vice chair Carmen Taitano and Man'amko Queen Rosalia Sablan.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANKPACIFIC, LTD., Plaintiff, vs. WILMER R. SABLAN aka WILMER RABAGO SABLAN and EMERITHA T. TORRES aka EMERITHA TAISACAN TORRES, Defendant.

CIVIL ACTION NO. 07-0360

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE OF HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Amended Order issued by the Court in this matter on October 31, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 011 G 942 containing an area of 917 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 011 G 18, dated December 03, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-4286, dated December 09, 1993, the description herein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on 1st, December, 2008, at the hour of 3:00p.m., at Carlsmith Building, Isa Drive, Capitol Hill, P.O. Box 5241, Saipan, MP 96950-5241. The sale will be opened to general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED: Saipan, MP, November 5, 2008.

/s/ **VINCENT J. SEMAN**
Attorneys for Plaintiff

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Request for acquittal in marriage fraud denied

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman issued an order Tuesday denying a man's request that he be acquitted on a charge of soliciting for marriage fraud.

Wiseman said a careful reading of the law's language and other jurisdictions' concurring interpretations of their own solicitation statutes makes it clear that Munnah Miah's argument is fatally flawed.

Wiseman said solicitation does not require that the person being solicited be actually culpable or guilty of the underlying crime.

The judge said there was enough evidence for a jury to identify Miah as the individual who committed the offense.

The issue is related to the case of Maria Aurelio Ray, Muhammad Saiful Islam, and Minto Minto, who were charged with one count of conspiracy to commit marriage fraud and one count of solicitation. Ray, Minto, and Munnaf Miah were also charged with one count of conspiracy to commit marriage fraud and one count of solicitation.

According to the charging information, Ray, Islam, and Minto unlawfully agreed in March 2007 that Islam would marry Alisilynn Mallens for the sole purpose of obtaining a labor or immigration benefit.

Wiseman

In March 2007, Ray, Miah, and Minto allegedly conspired that Miah would marry Severene Kosam for the purpose of obtaining a labor or immigration benefit.

In March 2007, Ray, Islam and Minto allegedly encouraged Kosam and Mallens to arrange the marriage of Islam and Mallens.

In the same period, Ray, Miah, and Minto allegedly encouraged Kosam to marry Miah.

Last May the jury found Ray guilty of two counts of conspiracy to commit marriage fraud, but acquitted her of two counts of solicitation.

In July, the jury found Miah guilty of soliciting for marriage fraud, but acquitted him on the charge of conspiring with other persons to commit marriage fraud.

Last month, Miah, through counsel Stephen Woodruff, filed a corrected motion for judgment of acquittal.

Woodruff argued the government did not present enough evidence showing Miah solicited Severene Kosam to commit marriage fraud because it is legally impossible for Miah to commit the offense of marriage fraud.

Woodruff cited that Kosam was only seeking monetary benefits rather than an immigration benefit, so it was legally impossible for Kosam to commit marriage fraud and therefore, it is legally impossible for defendant to be convicted of soliciting Kosam to commit such offense.

But Wiseman disagreed. He said it is inconsequential that Kosam could not have been charged with marriage fraud.

Wiseman said Miah solicited Kosam to participate in the crime.

"Therefore, it is unquestionable that Kosam, the solicitee, did not have to be legally capable of committing marriage fraud in order for defendant to be convicted of solicitation," he said. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Nov. 27 is 'Feed Saipan Thursday'

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

For the seventh year, Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela has signed a proclamation designating Nov. 27 as "Feed Saipan Thursday," calling on people to fast for two meals on this day and donate the money that would have been spent on food to Karidat for the purpose of feeding the hungry.

The signing was done yesterday in a simple ceremony at the Mayor's Office in Afetna Square in San Antonio in the presence of officials and staff from the Karidat Social Services led by its executive director, Angie V. Deleon Guerrero.

Guerrero also signed the mayoral proclamation.

The proclamation expresses the resolve of Saipan residents to join the rest of the nation in remembering the poor, hungry and homeless during Thanksgiving Day.

Hundreds of residents continue to experience hardship in their life as they face the rising cost of utilities, food commodities, fuel, medical and other necessities of life.

"The people of Saipan never forget that millions of Americans, including 13 million children who live in households without an adequate supply of food, and who need our comfort and sustenance this Thanksgiving Day; and take note that some of our unfortunate residents experience hunger most of the time," the proclamation states.

It further stressed that selfless sacrifice breeds a genuine spirit of Thanksgiving, both affirming and resorting fundamental values of caring and compassion for the poor.

In a speech, Tudela said more residents continue to feel the economic hardship, coupled with rising unemployment due to many businesses closing down that has led to the continued decline in government revenues.

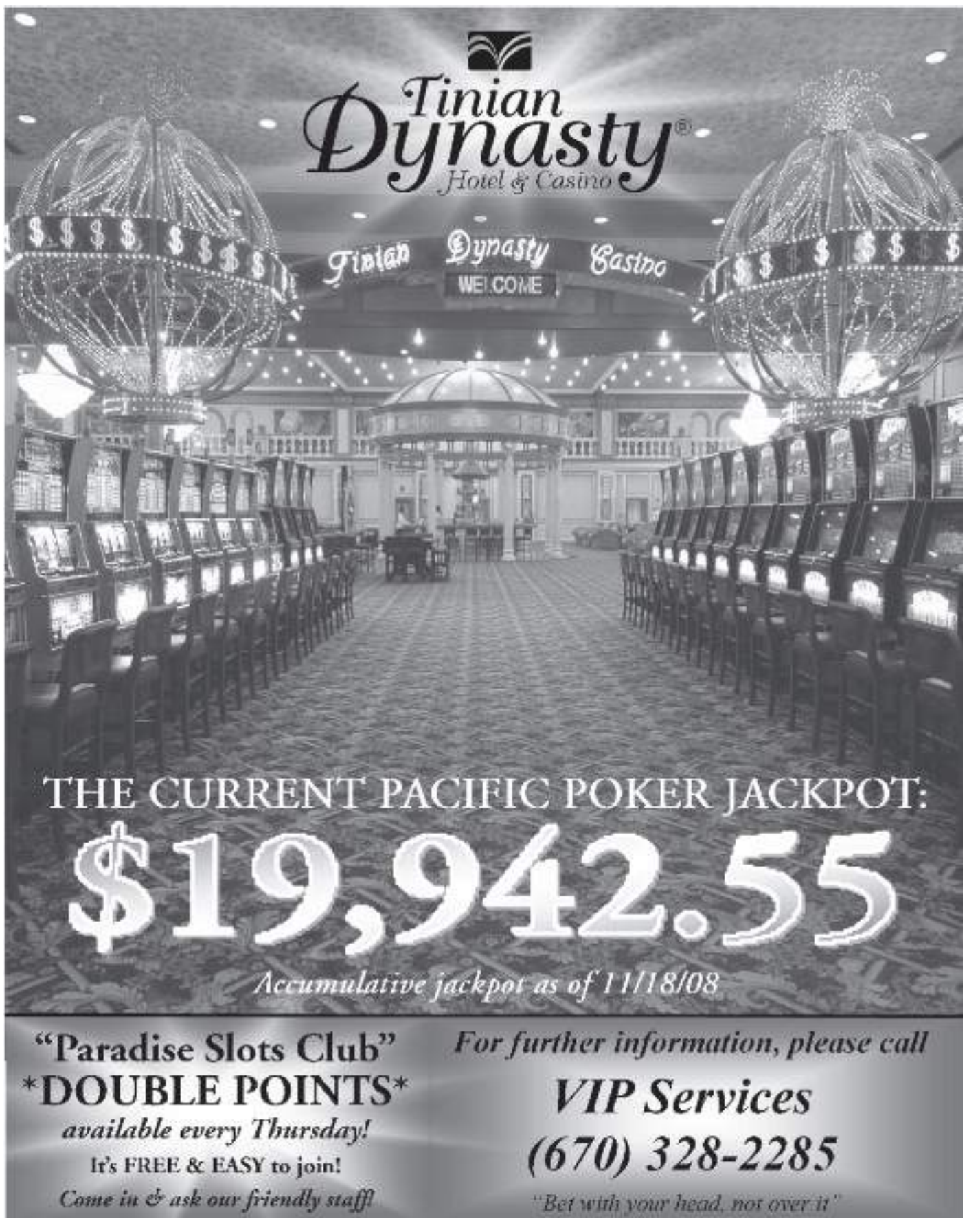
"Many of our residents continue to have problems meeting their family's needs. Occasionally, families cannot even serve food on the table," Tudela said.

He noted that prices of fuel more than tripled in the last five months while the cost of utilities have also gone up in the last two years.

Likewise, he said the cost of health care has increased and majority of people cannot even afford medical insurance to help them meet the costs of every doctor's visit at the clinic and at CHC.

Tudela appealed to the business community and individuals to be generous enough to donate canned goods, milk and clothing.

As in the past, the Mayor's Office will receive all donations (cash or in kind) to be turned over to Karidat shortly after Thanksgiving Day.



Appreciation Message

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Pacific American Title	Marianas Resort
Sushi Land	Roshi's
Marianas Seaside Circuit	Naked Fish
Aquarius Beach Tower	Guang dong
CTSI	Fiesta Resort
Pacific Islands Club	Korean Hardware
Tinian Dynasty	99 cents Supermarket
Shell Marianas	Han Nam Market
UPS	Kim Chang Jun
PTI	Song Eun Joon
Saipan Grand Hotel	Kang Sin Won
Hyatt Regency Saipan	Marpac & Western Sales

All the sponsors, individuals & teams that participated in the Custom Goodwill Softball & Golf Tournament.

All the individuals and businesses that purchased raffle tickets.

All the individuals that assisted our committees in one way or another at our events.

Joint briefing in CNMI, Calif. on lawsuit vs CUC

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Attorney's Office and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency yesterday held a joint press briefing on Saipan and in San Francisco through a video teleconference where they discussed the lawsuit against the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

On Saipan, present at the U.S. Attorney's Office at the Horiguchi Building in Garapan were U.S. Attorney for the CNMI Leonardo M. Rapadas, Assistant U.S. Attorney civil chief Mikel W. Schwab, Assistant U.S. Attorney James Benedetto, and EPA Emergency Response Office's Michelle Rogow.

In San Francisco, participants in the briefing included Environmental & Natural Resources Division's Environmental Enforcement Section senior attorney Bradley R. O'Brien, EPA Office of Regional Counsel attorneys Marcela Von Vacano and Janet Magnuson, EPA Pacific Islands Office manager John McCarroll, Pacific Islands Office environmental engineers Mike Lee and Barry Pollock, Department of Justice paralegal Doraine Gonzales, and DOJ summer employee Mat Hanjom.

The teleconference was intended to announce the filing of lawsuit against CUC before the U.S. District Court for the NMI, alleging various violations of the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act.

"At the same time, we also filed two stipulated orders where the government and CUC agree to certain things: One is in relation to water and sewage system at CUC and the other deals with oil storage [and] power system," Rapadas said.

He emphasized that they are not filing the lawsuit to punish anyone or to get money from the CNMI or CUC.

"What we are looking for is a long-term goal, a long-term purpose of making sure that the drinking water is safe, that the water that you're swimming in is also safe," he said.

Rapadas said the people in San Francisco who are in the video teleconference have been with the U.S. Attorney from the very beginning to go over the situation and help them come up with solutions with CUC.

"For this situation, EPA has been the one that has been working with us, with CUC and the CNMI government," he said.

Rapadas said the CUC violations were not anything new, with CUC already having had a history of receiving EPA administrative orders.

"This is not something that just kind of popped up. It's something that has been going on for a while. And we hope to rectify it from this point on with the stipulated orders," Rapadas explained.

Schwab said they have been involved in trying to resolve these violations through the EPA administrative processes but that it has now come to a lawsuit.

McCarroll characterizes the filing of the lawsuits as a milestone for improvement of water and wastewater services in the CNMI.

McCarroll said the lawsuit and stipulated orders mark the completion of negotiations and settlements that have been signed by both the CNMI government and the U.S. government to make these improvements.

"As the U.S. Attorney said, the intent is not to punish CUC. We are not issuing any fines. I think what we are doing today in this whole action is about creating a halfway point to bring CUC, its drinking water, wastewater and oil storage system in compliance," he said. "It is about protecting CNMI's residents and environments."

Rapadas said what they are doing today is not providing a band-aid to the problem.

"We want to make sure that the whole patient is cured," he said.

Rogow said the third part of the action relates to CUC's oil storage transfer and delivery system. Rogow said it involves the power plants facilities on both Saipan and Tinian.

"This specifically aims at getting CUC into compliance with oil spill prevention, preparedness and response regulations. It covers not only things like the drum storage, the excess of the amount of used oil drums at the power plant here, but also the infrastructure… and the pipeline which transfers oil into the main power plant," she said.

Rogow said the order in the agreement is designed to make CUC focus on maintaining a better oil storage and delivery system, providing oil spill prevention measures, ensuring that their tanks and pipelines are safe.

The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency hold a joint press briefing yesterday on Saipan and in San Francisco through a video teleconference regarding the lawsuit against the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. On Saipan, from left, are Assistant U.S. Attorney James Benedetto, U.S. Attorney for the CNMI Leonardo M. Rapadas, Assistant U.S. Attorney civil chief Mikel W. Schwab, and EPA Emergency Response Office's Michelle Rogow. In the TV screen are those in San Francisco composed of officials, attorneys and staff from the Department of Justice and EPA.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

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Beaujolais Nouveau arrives on Saipan today

Beaujolais Nouveau, the fresh, fruity red wine from France, arrives on Saipan this Thursday. Beaujolais Nouveau is a special wine because it is released only once a year, on the third Thursday of November, around the world.

Beaujolais Nouveau (pronounced bow-joe-lay noo-vo) literally means "new"—nouveau means "new" in French—and Beaujolais is the wine produced in Burgundy France, using Gamay Noir grapes.

The taste of the wine is fresh and easy-to-drink. This is because, unlike other wines, Beaujolais Nouveau wines are not aged—the grapes are picked, fermented into wine, bottled, and shipped around the world in the same harvest.

The result of the speedy bottling process is a fruity red wine that appeals to everyone.

Beaujolais Nouveau pairs well with grilled or roasted meats, a variety of pastas, salads and cheeses. It is excellent with light or dark meats, and is particularly nice when served with turkey. It would be an excellent accompaniment to a traditional Thanksgiving brunch or dinner. The wine should be served slightly cool, around 55°F.

Celebrate the festive season by sampling Beaujolais Nouveau from the French wineries of Georges Duboeuf or Antonin Rodet at the following venues, beginning Nov. 20:

- Aqua Resort Club Saipan
- Casa Urashima
- Country House Restaurant
- Fiesta Resort Saipan
- Furusato Japanese Restaurant
- Hyatt Regency Saipan
- Kuri Ya Japanese Restaurant
- Saipan World Resort
- Pacific Islands Club Saipan

For more information, contact Orleyne Tabucanon, market coordinator, Pacific Wine & Spirits, Inc. at (671) 888-8476 or email orleynet@pwsgu.com. ***(PR)***

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Beaujolais Nouveau from the French wineries of Georges Duboeuf are displayed at the Hyatt Regency Saipan during last year's launch of the special wine.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Advance happy birthday greetings go out to our baby girl Emelsha Aldan Cepeda, left, who will be turning 7 years old this Saturday, Nov. 22, 2008. With love from mom, dad and sisters Lysh, Ding, and Patty and all the family. Emelsha is shown here with her sister Edinna Aldan Cepeda.

WELCOME! CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tony and Maricar Cepeda are shown here with their kids in a picture taken at Saipan Grand Hotel during the Marriage Encounter Weekend Nov-14-16, 2008. Congratulations and welcome to the Marriage Encounter family!

Congratulations and welcome to the Marriage Encounter family! Ton and Lorraine Arriola are shown with their Prayer Couple, Mr. & Mrs. Springer, at the Saipan Grand Hotel during the Marriage Encounter Weekend Nov. 14-16, 2008.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

November 20, 2000

Initiative to elect AG gets Senate approval

The Senate cleared two measures on Friday pertaining to the post of Attorney General, including the legislative initiative proposing its selection by popular vote. Senate Legislative Initiative 12-2, passed on first reading, is now up for public scrutiny as senators are expected to gather recommendations and input before giving their final approval.

FAS exclusion from public housing hiked NMHC delinquency rate

A ruling that disqualified citizens of the Freely Associated States from public housing benefits two years ago pushed up the number of residents who are delinquent in their rental payment to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation. Executive Director Marylou S. Ada disclosed some eviction incidents had to be made in the past because of high delinquency rate among FAS families who were receiving public housing benefits before they were disqualified from the Section-8 Program.

November 20, 2001

Fund drops settlement talks with Torres

The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund has terminated settlement negotiations with former Administrator Juan S. Torres after both parties failed to arrive at an amicable agreement over the terms of the settlement. Besides this, the Fund's Board of Trustees also voted unanimously to reterminate Torres's employment with the Fund during Thursday's board meeting on Rota.

Husband tagged in Nida Blanca murder

The spotlight on the brutal killing of Philippine cinema icon Nida Blanca turned to her husband, Rod Lauren Strunk, who was identified by the self-confessed killer to have masterminded the murder. The confessed killer of Blanca, Philip Medel, Jr., was presented by Task Force Marsha, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Chief Nestorio Gualberto before Philippine media Monday.

November 20, 2003

Judge dismisses suit filed by Manglona's bloc

Upholding the constitutional doctrine on the separation of the three branches of government, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo yesterday dismissed with finality the lawsuit filed by Sen. Paul Manglona's bloc, which sought to declare as unlawful the Senate's Aug. 27 session and leadership changes made by the group of Sen. Pete Reyes. Govendo dismissed the suit on the ground of judicial abstention, urging Senate factions to work out among themselves solutions to the issues raised before the court.

Is there hope for Senate unity?

Will Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo's candid and entertaining lecture on the longstanding leadership struggle in the Senate result in a reconciliation among the feuding members? Senate President Paul A. Manglona said his group is willing to sit down with opposition senators, led by Sen. Pete P. Reyes, after the four-member minority finished serving their 30-day suspensions.

November 20, 2004

150K fuel subsidy proposed

Acting Gov. Diego T. Benavente is pushing for a $150,000 a month fuel subsidy for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to arrest any potential power supply breakdown in the CNMI.Benavente said yesterday that the figure is based on a 1.5 cent subsidy to be appropriated by the Legislature.

Australian firm to take over Saipan air traffic control

An Australian company has won a multi-million-dollar contract to provide air traffic control services at the airports of Saipan, Guam, and some Hawaiian islands. Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Carlos Salas said Airservices Australia will replace Serco, which currently operates Saipan's air traffic control tower on behalf of the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration. The five-year contract is expected to commence late this year or early 2005. "We're just waiting for FAA to officially notify us about it. We'll be meeting with FAA very soon to discuss specific details about the new contract," Salas said.

Joeten's Best Buys of the Week!

November 20, thru November 26, 2008

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

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EDITORIAL

At last, an Iraq timetable

Finally, we think we see light at the end of the Iraq tunnel. Over the weekend, the Iraqi Cabinet approved a plan hammered out by the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and U.S. officials to restrict U.S. combat operations starting Jan. 1, pull American troops out of cities by June and withdraw from the country entirely by the end of 2011. The Iraqi parliament started debating the pact Monday and, with luck, will approve it next week. The timetable is too long for Iraqis who would like to see the full devolution of sovereignty in December, when the U.N. mandate governing the U.S. presence ends, and too imperfect for those who fear what will happen when U.S. troops leave. Nonetheless, although President Bush long opposed it, there is a timetable at last, and one that could mark the beginning of the end of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

The agreement sends two important messages to the international community: First, the United States truly does not plan a permanent military presence in Iraq, and second, it will not launch attacks on neighbors from Iraq. The accord bans U.S. cross-border raids, a pragmatic concession by the administration to seal the deal. The United States, however, is not the only party to exercise pragmatism here. Iraq's leading cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, said he would not object to the pact if it was supported by a majority of legislators. Iran's judiciary chief, Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, also said that the Iraqi Cabinet had done "very well" to approve it. Iran apparently wants to send a conciliatory message to President-elect Barack Obama.

If those leaders have been wise to grasp this moment of opportunity, it is not because they are naive about the challenges. Indeed, the agreement presents problems for all parties in Iraq. Al-Maliki risks looking too pro-American ahead of upcoming provincial elections. Shiite leader Muqtada al-Sadr and many Sunnis oppose the deal, although they probably don't have the votes to block it in parliament. The Kurds probably would prefer to have U.S. troops around awhile longer. Even if parliament approves the pact, the president and his two deputies must ratify it, meaning that Sunni Vice President Tariq Hashimi could cast a veto. We sincerely hope that isn't the case.

Precisely because it is difficult and requires compromise, passage of the so-called status of forces agreement would be a huge step toward ending the U.S. occupation and fostering an Iraqi culture of governance. It would put an end to negotiations that had been sucking the oxygen out of Iraqi politics for a year and would allow the country to move on to other issues of nation building, such as regional elections that should bring more Sunnis into the political process and an agreement to distribute oil revenue among the sects and regions. A pullback from Iraq would allow the United States to restore its credibility abroad and, just as important, to begin to heal the wounds inflicted by the war at home.

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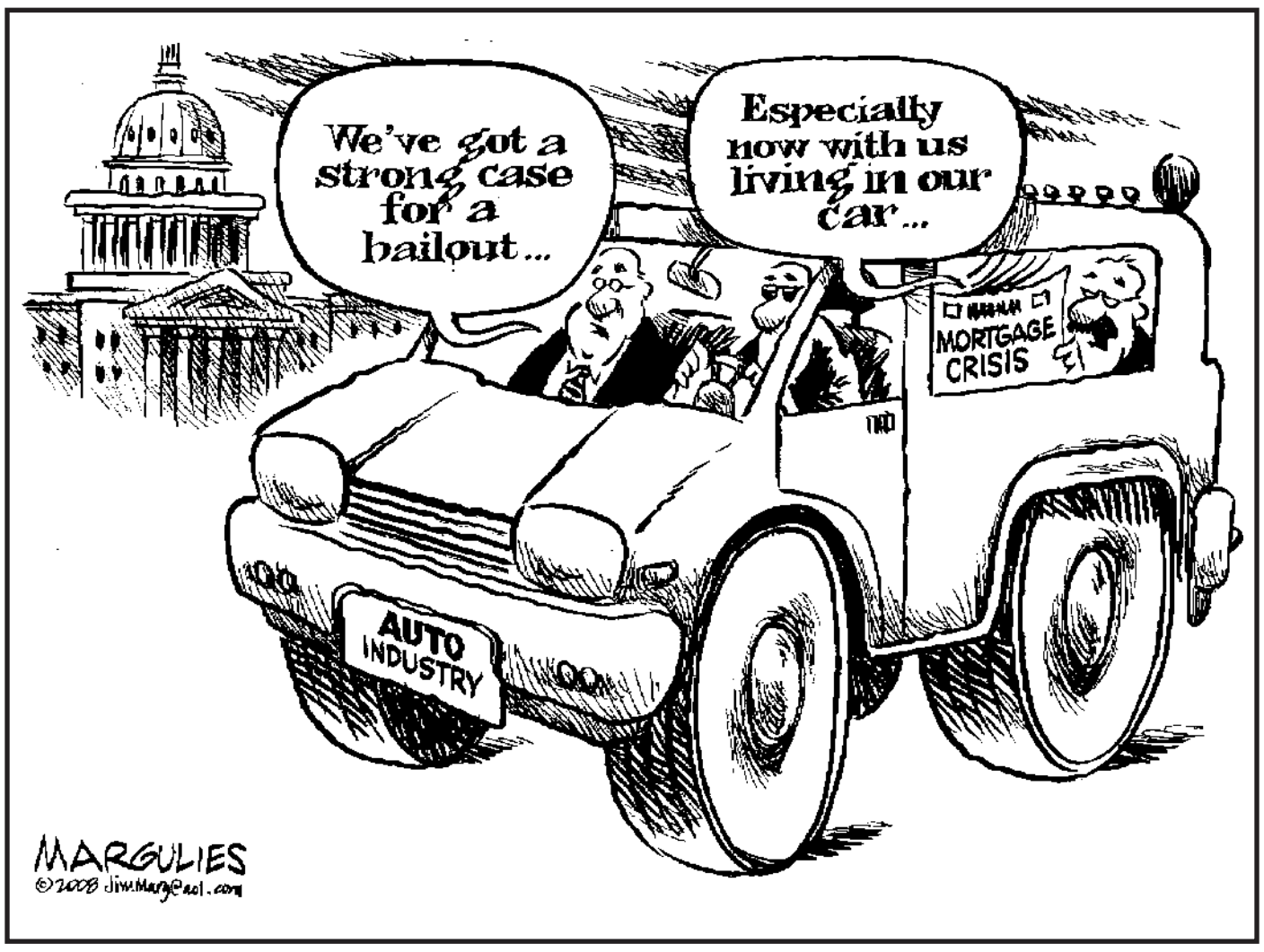


Monument momentum

A message to the world from the Friends of the Monument

By IGNACIO V. CABRERA
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

As we move toward the culmination of our goal of establishing a marine monument, we wish to offer this letter of gratitude to all those who have helped us reach this point in our journey.

The idea was a quite simple one: preserve the waters, along with the richness and biodiversity within, for this and future generations. As we stated in our formal request to President George W. Bush, *"Declaring the waters as a monument would expedite the process of bringing protection to the precious resources found in the waters there, while establishing specific federal responsibilities toward governance of the Monument, and enhancing our ocean legacy."*

Yet, as simple as the idea was, the journey to see its fruition has been one fraught with challenges. They were challenges, however, for which we were prepared.

Scientists will tell you that any new theory is first rejected as false, then dismissed as trivial, then accepted as important—but known all along. *(1. The theory is not true; 2. The theory is true, but it is unimportant; 3. The theory is true, and it is important—but we knew it all along.)* So, we suffered the slings and arrows of doubts from some…and we persevered.

Marketers will tell you that every new innovation goes through the stages of awareness, interest, evaluation, and trial before it is accepted. So, as interest mounted, we educated the masses about the benefits of such a monument to the CNMI…and we persevered.

Philosophers will tell you that all truth passes through three stages: First it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Finally, it is accepted as being self-evident. So, we responded to allegations of deception from our critics…and we persevered.

Playwrights will tell you that every great story must have conflict. It is the heart of drama. *(Someone wants something, and people and things keep getting in the way of them achieving the goal.)* So, we tolerated the media spin that portrayed the chasm between Monument supporters and critics; a spin which at times minimized the overwhelming support for the monument from within our community….and we persevered.

Finally, all of life's great achievers will tell you there is no victory without struggle, so we accepted the role of those who positioned themselves as our opponents, for we recognized the role of the opposition in every new theory, every new innovation, all truth, and every great story.

We realize, with all the attacks, the suspicion, the pace of change, the drama, the conflict, struggle, and false statements, the real danger lies not in our acceptance of the monument, but in allowing things to continue as they are. It is a fact that the health of our oceans continues to decline every year. Without intervention, species will disappear, reefs will die, and we will lose what has been described as "one of the most unique geological and biological environments on Earth."

In fact, the most compelling "danger" of a new revolutionary theory is the real and present harm its acceptance would inflict on the power, wealth or prestige of adherents to the already-existing theory. We are aware that there are those who feel their power, wealth or prestige is at stake. To them, we offer the assurance that we, like them, seek only the best for our children and future generations. We are willing to sacrifice a little in the interest of future need.

And, there is no victory without the efforts of those who have helped take this from a seed of an idea to being a part of the conversations within the highest echelons of power within these United States. Therefore, it is with a sense of gratitude that we, the Friends of the Monument, thank the following:

- We thank the scores of volunteers who donated countless hours helping our community become educated, and speak out about an issue important to the CNMI. Thank you.
- We thank the 5,632 residents (and growing, on an island of 13,000 indigenous and 60,000 total population) who have signed our petition. Thank you.
- We thank the business leaders who have come out bravely in support of the idea, and who have written letters to the media as well as to President Bush voicing their support. Thank you.
- We are thankful of the increasing coverage by the world media that has helped us shine a light on the natural beauty deserving of our attention and preservation. Thank you.
- We thank James Connaughton, chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, for his valuable time and energy listening to the concerns of our leaders and community. Thank you.
- And, finally, we thank First Lady Laura Bush for lending her presence and position to our cause, and to the momentum of the worldwide movement in support of the Monument. Thank you.

Historians will tell you that every great movement is subjected to attempts to suppress, and subvert, but that the worthy ones eventually gather grass-roots momentum and spark the changes that move us forward as a society. The annals of history are filled with evidence that there is no greater force than an idea whose time has come.

We believe *our* time has come.

Thank you, one and all.

Ignacio V. Cabrera is the chairman of the Friends of the Monument. For more information about the proposed Marianas Trench national Marine Monument, visit http://marianamonument.blogspot.com.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Lost dollars

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

My students recently made mystery shopper visits to several businesses to evaluate the staff's selling skills. The results were good for some, but dismal for half of the businesses. The general consensus was that most sales staff do not either know how to sell well, or they lack the motivation to do a good job.

Selling is one of the most overlooked and underutilized skills in most businesses, and it literally cost a company thousands of lost sales dollars each month. I'm not talking about high-pressure techniques designed to wrestle the dollars out of your pocket, but subtle persuasion strategies that help a customer feel good about their decision to make a purchase.

There have been several occasions when we visited a store with the intention to buy something, but we purposefully watched to see if the sales rep would help sell us. Many of those times we walked out of the store with our money still in our pocket because of anemic selling skills.

In reality, people do not want to be sold, they want to buy, but there are certain things that company reps can do to help improve the buying experience. Think about your last few visits at some local businesses and answer these 10 questions with a score between 1 and 10, with 10 being the highest score.

1. Was the store clean, well lit, and the products displayed in an attractive manner? Before you even interact with a person, you will start to form an opinion about the store and what is sold. If the place is attractive and organized, then you assume the store has its act together; however, if it is disorganized, dirty, and crowded, you may assume the products and services are shoddy.

2. Were you greeted with a friendly smile when you walked into the business? This sets the tone for the encounter and allows the staff to demonstrate that they are responsive and glad that you took time out of their busy schedule to visit your business.

3. Did someone attempt to put you at ease and build a relationship? Hopefully the staff seemed interested in you and asked your name, or at least volunteered their name.

4. Did the rep have good grooming and dress standards? This is an easy one to accomplish, but if the manager doesn't have high expectations, the staff may take advantage of the situation and have dress or grooming habits that can detract from the sale.

5. Were you asked questions so that the sales rep could understand your wants and needs? From our experience, very few people have attempted the most simple and basic investigation to understand our needs. Sure, some will ask how they can help, but almost none have gone into depth to understand the purpose of our visit and how they can best fulfill that purpose.

6. Did the person helping you translate product features into advantages and benefits? A feature is the physical characteristic of something that lets you know what it does, and a benefit lets you know what that product can do for you. Again, from our observation, this has been a rare occurrence.

7. Did the sales rep use a trial close during the conversation to see if I was ready to buy? There are many ways to ask for the order, but they all basically ask you if you want the product or service. Most in-store salespeople do not ask for the sale because they are afraid to hear the dreaded N-word…"No".

8. If I gave an objection, did the sales rep try to answer my objection or give me some more information to consider that might help me make a purchase? This is where you separate real salespeople from sales clerks who are just order takers.

9. Did the salesperson react positively when I decided not to buy an item? A good salesperson thinks long term and after doing his or her best to help satisfy a need of a prospect, realizes that there will be another chance to turn the prospect into a customer if the relationship is developed. If you say "no", but feel good about the interaction, there is a chance that you will want to return, right?

10. Was I thanked and invited to return as I was leaving the store? Not only should the salesperson start off on the right foot, but he or she should also end the interaction in a friendly manner that causes you to want to return.

So how did the businesses you visit score? If you had any that scored a perfect 100, please let us know because we have not yet visited one here. They do exist, but those businesses are as rare as a fruit bat on Saipan.

The myth of Lincoln and 'rivals'

By MATTHEW PINSKER
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Pinsker, author of Lincoln's Sanctuary: Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers' Home, *teaches Civil War history at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania.*

People love Doris Kearns Goodwin's book on the Lincoln presidency, "Team of Rivals." More important, for this moment in American history, Barack Obama loves it. The book is certainly fun to read, but its claim that Abraham Lincoln revealed his "political genius" through the management of his wartime Cabinet deserves a harder look, especially now that it seems to be offering a template for the new administration.

"Lincoln basically pulled in all the people who had been running against him into his Cabinet," is the way Obama has summarized Goodwin's thesis, adding, "Whatever personal feelings there were, the issue was how can we get this country through this time of crisis."

That's true enough, but the problem is, it didn't work that well for Lincoln. There were painful trade-offs with the "team of rivals" approach that are never fully addressed in the book or by others that offer happy-sounding descriptions of the Lincoln presidency.

Lincoln's decision to embrace former rivals, for instance, inevitably meant ignoring old friends -- a development they took badly. "We made Abe and, by God, we can unmake him," complained Chicago Tribune Managing Editor Joseph Medill in 1861. Especially during 1861 and 1862, the first two years of Lincoln's initially troubled administration, friends growled over his ingratitude as former rivals continued to play out their old political feuds.

In fairness, Goodwin describes several of these more difficult moments, such as when Secretary of State William Seward tried to seize political command from Lincoln during the Fort Sumter crisis. But she passes over their consequences too easily.

Although Seward, the former New York senator who had been the Republican front-runner, eventually proved helpful to the president, the effect of repeated disloyalty and unnecessary backroom drama from him and several other Cabinet officers was a significant factor in the early failures of the Union war effort.

By December 1862, there was a full-blown Cabinet crisis.

"We are now on the brink of destruction," Lincoln confided to a close friend after being deluged with congressional criticism and confronted by resignations from both Seward and Treasury Secretary Salmon P. Chase. Goodwin suggests that Lincoln's quiet confidence and impressive emotional intelligence enabled him to survive and ultimately forge an effective team out of his former rivals, but that's more wishful thinking than serious analysis.

Consider this inconvenient truth: Out of the four leading vote-getters for the 1860 Republican presidential nomination whom Lincoln placed on his original team, three left during his first term—one in disgrace, one in defiance and one in disgust.

Simon Cameron was the disgraced rival, Lincoln's failed first secretary of War. Goodwin essentially erased him from her group biography, not mentioning him in the book's first 200 pages, even though he placed third, after Seward and Lincoln, on the first Republican presidential ballot. Cameron proved so corrupt and inept that the Republican-controlled House of Representatives censured him after he was removed from office in 1862.

Chase was the defiant rival. As Goodwin acknowledges, the Treasury chief never reconciled himself to Lincoln's victory, continuously angling to replace him. Lincoln put up with this aggravation until he secured renomination and then dumped his brilliant but arrogant subordinate because, in his words, their "mutual embarrassment" was no longer sustainable.

Attorney General Edward Bates was the disgusted rival. The elder statesman -- 67 when he was appointed -- never felt at home in the Lincoln Cabinet and played only a marginal role in shaping policy. He resigned late in the first term. His diary reflects deep discontent with what he considered the relentless political maneuvering of his Cabinet peers and even the president.

"Alas!" Bates wrote in August 1864, "that I should live to see such abject fear -- such small stolid indifference to duty -- such open contempt of Constitution and law -- and such profound ignorance of policy and prudence!"

Only Seward endured throughout the Civil War. He and Lincoln did become friends, and he provided some valuable political advice, but the significance of his contributions as Lincoln's secretary of State have been challenged by many historians, and his repeated fights with other party leaders were always distracting.

John Hay, one of Lincoln's closest aides, noted in his diary that by the summer of 1863, the president essentially had learned to rule his Cabinet with "tyrannous authority," observing that the "most important things he decides & there is no cavil."

Over the years, it has become easy to forget that hard edge and the once bad times that nearly destroyed a president. Lincoln's Cabinet was no team. His rivals proved to be uneven as subordinates. Some were capable despite their personal disloyalty, yet others were simply disastrous.

Lincoln was a political genius, but his model for Cabinet-building should stand more as a cautionary tale than as a leadership manual.

Letters to the Editor

Check the Covenant!

Appalling the view rendered by Ms. Wendy Doromal on a report commissioned by the governor to analyze the effects of federal takeover of labor and immigration as "propaganda." But it isn't so appalling given her obvious intransigence to accepting the validity of expert research that led to the conclusion of economic annihilation.

There are two issues that come to mind as I ponder her views. They are: 1). What has Ms. Doromal done to put Uncle Sam in check on his obligation under the Covenant Agreement to "provide for a progressively higher standard of living" for Chamorros and Carolinians? 2). Given the same opportunity to analyze the same set of laws, would her conclusions be different from what expert views have concluded?

Ms. Doromal, show me one concrete undertaking you've done on a unilateral basis to improve the lot of at least 80 percent of the indigenous people. I mean, you were and still are at the forefront to assist foreigners—non-indigenous people—secure what the Covenant doesn't provide, at the expense of violating our inalienable rights to greater self-government. Take a quick glimpse at the Covenant Agreement, an agreement concluded between two sovereign entities and be guided accordingly.

It's a clever tactic to employ human rights as part of your agenda to attract national sound bites. Has it ever occurred to you that the huge employers aren't, by any stretch of the imagination, indigenous-owned factories? Is it fair that we bear the brunt of all that foreigners have inflicted against our people and ruined reputation of these islands?

But then at the end of the day, Ms Doromal, *we are the permanent hosts of these isles* and have found your agenda and other similar groups smelling like spoiled French cheese deteriorating under the sun. Enough is enough! And I am ready to take you or anyone else to task henceforth. *Nahoñg na insuttu in chalegua kontra i natibun este siha na islas. Tonta!*

John S. DelRosario, Jr.
As Gonno, Saipan

An act of kindness

On Monday evening, Nov. 17, 2008, at 6:15pm, I walked from the parking lot at D building to the cafeteria at Marianas High School. I was picking up my grandson at rehearsal for *The Secret Garden*, a play being performed by the International Thespian Society.

As I was walking across the campus in the dark, suddenly beside me was Mr. Ballesteros, the security guard at the high school from 6pm until 6am. We spoke and he accompanied me along the walkway to the cafeteria. Little did I imagine that several hours later, Mr. Ballesteros would give his life protecting those grounds.

Possibly his last act was one of kindness to an older person. I know that I will always be grateful that he was there, and I just wanted to thank him posthumously for being on the job that night. I sincerely hope that the person or persons who committed this horrible crime will be brought to justice. If they won't turn themselves in, then hopefully someone who knows something about this issue will come forward with information. My condolences to his family and co-workers; he will be remembered in my thoughts and prayers.

Sylvia Wagner Haywood
I Denni, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲85	▼77
Palau	Showers	▲87	▼78
Yap	Showers	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲83	▼75
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Showers	▲84	▼75

Around The Globe

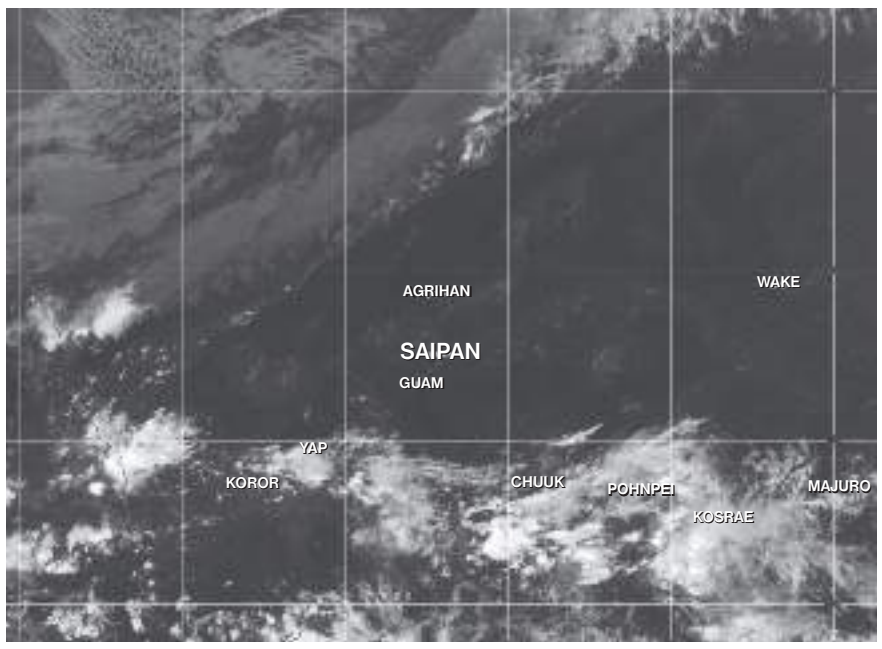
Auckland	Sunny	▲67	▼54
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲52	▼28
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲79	▼66
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲82	▼69
London	Cloudy	▲54	▼39
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲74	▼52
Manila	Showers	▲85	▼78
Melbourne	Showers	▲69	▼50
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲73	▼57
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲42	▼32
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲47	▼36
Paris	Showers	▲52	▼44
Pusan	Showers	▲52	▼40
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲57	▼45
Salem	Rain	▲53	▼38
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲61	▼48
Seoul	Rain/Snow	▲45	▼27
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲55	▼39
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲48	▼34

Tides

Saipan Harbor

7:16AM Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
2:41PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
8:51PM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N146E to beyond 130E at 18N. Extensive cloud-cover and scattered showers extend 300 miles northwest of the front. Several embedded surface troughs within convergent trade-wind flow along with favorable upper-level winds are combining to produce extensive cloud-cover, scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms in three areas. One area just east of Yap is within 60 miles of a line from 9N137E to 9N142E to 6N148E. Another area from near Chuuk across Pohnpei is within 100 miles of a line from 5N153E to 9N162E. The third area is across Kosrae eastward to the Marshall Islands or within an area bounded by a line from 7N161E to 8N175E to 1N170E to 2N160E back to 7N161E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:21AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:22AM	5:44 PM
Saturday	6:22AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:23AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:23AM	5:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today		12:38PM
Friday	12:44AM	1:17PM
Saturday	1:35AM	1:54PM
Sunday	2:25AM	2:30PM
Monday	3:14AM	3:07PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 19, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:40am	Daily
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily

Saipan-Incheon

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7

Guam-Manila

CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:25am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:15am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:25am+1	Daily

Incheon-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:40am+1	3,4,6,7

Shanghai-Saipan

FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6

Manila-Guam

CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
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- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
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Business

Big 3 carmakers beg for $25B

WASHINGTON (AP)—Detroit's Big Three automakers pleaded with a reluctant Congress Tuesday for a $25 billion lifeline to save the once-proud titans of U.S. industry, pointedly warning of a national economic catastrophe should they collapse.

Millions of layoffs would follow their demise, they said, as damaging effects rippled across an already-faltering economy.

But the new rescue plan appeared stalled on Capitol Hill, opposed by the Bush administration and Republicans in Congress who don't want to dip into the Treasury Department's $700 billion financial bailout program to come up with the $25 billion in loans.

Rank and file Republicans and Democrats from states heavily impacted by the auto industry worked behind the scenes trying to hammer out a compromise that could speed some aid to the automakers before year's end. But it was an uphill fight.

"Our industry ... needs a bridge to span the financial chasm that has opened up before us," General Motors Corp. CEO Rick Wagoner told the Senate Banking Committee. He blamed the industry's predicament not on management failures but on the deepening global financial crisis.

And Robert Nardelli, CEO of Chrysler LLC, told the panel the bailout would be "the least costly alternative" when compared with damage from bankruptcy.

Under questioning from skeptical senators, both said they'd be willing to consider slashing their salaries to $1 to show a willingness to sacrifice for federal help.

Sympathy for the industry was sparse, however, with bailout fatigue dominating Capitol Hill. Lawmakers bristled with pent-up criticism of the auto industry, and questioned whether a stopgap loan would really cure what ails the companies.

At the start of a more than four hour grilling before his committee, Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., told the leaders of GM, Chrysler and Ford Motor Co. that the industry was "seeking treatments for wounds that I believe to a large extent were self-inflicted."

"You're asking an awful lot," Dodd, the panel chairman, said at the close of the session. "I'd like to tell that you in the next couple of days this is going to happen. I don't think it is."

Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., complained that the larger financial crisis "is not the only reason why the domestic auto industry is in trouble."

He cited "inefficient production" and "costly labor agreements" that put the U.S. automakers at a disadvantage to foreign companies.

AP
In this July 25, 2008 file photo, General Motors Corp. headquarters are shown in Detroit.

Consumers may get ray of great news: lower prices

WASHINGTON (AP)—American consumers hit by a seemingly endless stream of bad news, from vanishing jobs to shrinking retirement accounts, may be in for a small dose of relief: lower prices at stores.

The Consumer Price Index, the country's most closely watched inflation gauge, probably will show a dip of 0.5 percent in October, after being flat in September, when that report is released Wednesday, according to economists' forecasts.

Even with the price reprieve, consumers are in no mood to go on a shopping spree. They have been cutting back sharply on spending because of the strains from job losses, shrinking nest eggs and falling home prices.

The retrenchment jolted the national economy into reverse in the third quarter. Many predict economic activity will continue to shrink through the rest of this year and during the first three months of next year, more than satisfying one definition of a recession. That is, two straight quarters where the economy contracts.

Another report out Wednesday probably will show that the housing market continues to be in a deep funk. Builders are expected to cut back on home construction, one of the economy's weakest spots.

Oil steady near 22-month low below $55

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices were steady below $55 a barrel Wednesday in Asia as investors paused to examine the extent of global economic weakness, which has sent crude down more than 60 percent in four months.

Light, sweet crude for December delivery was up 19 cents to $54.58 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday in Singapore. The contract Tuesday fell 56 cents to settle at $54.39, the lowest since January 2007.

"Market sentiment is still bearish, but not as bearish as a week ago," said Clarence Chu, a trader with market maker Hudson Capital Energy in Singapore. "Volatility has come down and the market is consolidating a bit."

Stock markets have served for the past few months as a barometer of investor perceptions about the health of the global economy. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 1.8 percent Tuesday as Hewlett-Packard Co. said fourth quarter and 2009 results will exceed analyst expectations.

Most Asian stocks, however, fell Wednesday. Japan's benchmark Nikkei index fell 1.8 percent, Hong Kong's Hang Seng index dropped 0.3 percent and the Korea Composite Stock Price Index slid 3.2 percent.

Oil investors have already priced in a recession in developed countries and only evidence of an especially severe or prolonged slowdown may push prices down further, Chu said.

Nation

Holder is Obama's top choice for attorney general

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama's top choice for attorney general is Eric Holder, a former No. 2 Justice Department official in the Clinton administration and Obama campaign aide who would become the first African American to serve as the nation's chief lawyer.

The Obama transition team has gone so far as to ask senators whether they would confirm Holder, who reviewed Clinton's controversial pardon of fugitive Marc Rich just leaving office, an Obama official and people close to the matter said Tuesday.

But the Obama official said the decision has not been finalized, and transition spokesmen said no decision has been made.

Holder did not return messages seeking comment Tuesday. Asked Monday by The Associated Press whether he expected to be nominated, he responded in an e-mail: "Who knows?"

One person involved in the talks said the Obama team has received some assurances that, while the pardon would certainly come up during hearings, the nomination likely wouldn't be held up.

All spoke on condition of anonymity to describe private conversations.

Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, said the pardon "would be a factor to consider."

"I wouldn't want to articulate it among the top items but it's worthwhile to look at," he told reporters.

Asked if Holder would be a good choice for attorney general, Specter said it was too soon to say.

"I know something of Holder's work in the Clinton administration and that's about it," he said. "I'd have to take a much closer look at his record and talk to him and think about it."

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., had not been informed about Holder, his spokeswoman said.

On the last day of Clinton's term, Holder, then the deputy attorney general, was asked whether Clinton should pardon Rich, a wealthy commodities dealer who had spent years running from tax charges. Holder said he was "neutral, leaning toward favorable" on the pardon. Clinton later cited that as among the factors that persuaded him to issue the pardon.

Holder has publicly apologized for what he said was a snap decision that he should have paid more attention to. Had he taken more time to review the case, he would have advised against a pardon, he said.

AP

In this June 9, 2008 file photo, former Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder arrives on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Bonfire blamed for sparking Calif. wildfire

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A bonfire built by a group of young adults caused a weekend wildfire in Santa Barbara that destroyed 210 homes, including multimillion dollar mansions, and injured more than two dozen people, authorities said Tuesday.

An anonymous tip led to the discovery that 10 college students had gathered for a late night hangout at an abandoned property where the fire originated, Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown said. He declined to say which college the students attended.

"It appears this fire was the result of carelessness, not criminal intent," Brown said.

No criminal charges have been filed, but the county district attorney will review the case, Brown said.

The fire consumed nearly 2,000 acres in Santa Barbara County and critically injured a couple who were burned as they fled their home, which was destroyed by the flames.

The college group left the smoldering bonfire in the middle of the night and the embers sparked the wildfire 13 to 14 hours later, Brown said. The group had been hanging out at a property known locally as the "tea garden" next to an abandoned tea house in the hills of Montecito.

"They thought the fire was extinguished, but we don't have a lot of detail to disclose about what they did to do so," Brown said.

The fire was the first of three blazes to erupt in Southern California in the last week which have collectively damaged or destroyed about 1,000 homes and blacked more than 65 square miles.

In Southern California, the Santa Ana winds that swept six counties like a blowtorch died down Tuesday, allowing crews to mop up the smoldering hotspots.

Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens loses re-election bid

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—Sen. Ted Stevens, the longest serving Republican in Senate history, narrowly lost his re-election bid Tuesday, marking the downfall of a Washington political power and Alaska icon who couldn't survive a conviction on federal corruption charges. His defeat by Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich moves Senate Democrats within two seats of a filibuster-proof 60-vote majority.

Stevens

Stevens' ouster on his 85th birthday marks an abrupt realignment in Alaska politics and will alter the power structure in the Senate, where he has served since the days of the Johnson administration while holding seats on some of the most influential committees in Congress.

The crotchety octogenarian built like a birch sapling likes to encourage comparisons with the Incredible Hulk, but he occupies an outsized place in Alaska history. His involvement in politics dates to the days before Alaska statehood, and he is esteemed for his ability to secure billions of dollars in federal aid for transportation and military projects. The Anchorage airport bears his name; in Alaska, it's simply "Uncle Ted."

Tuesday's tally of just over 24,000 absentee and other ballots gave Begich 146,286, or 47.56 percent, to 143,912, or 46.76 percent, for Stevens.

A recount is possible.

Begich said the defining issue in the race was the desire for a new direction in Washington, not Stevens' legal problems.

Alaska voters "wanted to see change," he told reporters in Anchorage. "Alaska has been in the midst of a generational shift - you could see it."

Clinton lawyers vetting her for secretary of state

CHICAGO (AP)—Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton has engaged a team of prominent lawyers to help President-elect Barack Obama vet her candidacy for secretary of state even as some insiders criticized the pick and advisers to the former first lady said she was weighing whether to take the job if Obama offered it.

Attorneys Cheryl Mills, David Kendall and Robert Barnett are working with the Obama transition team to review information about the Clintons' background and finances, including Bill Clinton's post-presidential business deals and relationships with foreign governments. Bruce Lindsey, a longtime Clinton adviser who now heads the former president's charitable foundation, has taken a leadership role in the process, aides said.

All represented the Clintons on legal matters in the White House, including President Clinton's dalliance with intern Monica Lewinsky that led to his impeachment in 1998.

Officials knowledgeable about the vetting said it has gone smoothly and that both Clintons were cooperating fully.

Bill Clinton already has appeared to take an important step toward smoothing his wife's path to the job.

Democrats familiar with the negotiations said the former president has suggested he would step away from day-to-day responsibility for his foundation while his wife served and would alert the State Department to his speaking schedule and any new sources of income.A top aide involved in the vetting said there was nothing obvious in the former president's dealings that would torpedo his wife's prospects for the job. The aide was not authorized to discuss the matter, and would speak only on background.

ACROSS THE NATION

8-year-old admits double shooting in police video

ST. JOHNS, Ariz. (AP)—An 8-year-old boy accused in the deaths of his father and another man gave police conflicting accounts about the shootings, at one point saying, "I wasn't shooting any guns" before admitting to firing at least two shots at each of the men.

Sitting in an oversized chair, his feet dangling above the floor, the boy told law enforcement officials in an hour-long police video released Tuesday that he found the bodies of his father, Vincent Romero, 29, and Timothy Romans, 39, when he returned home from school. "I was thinking, 'What the heck is going on?'" the boy said in the video released to The Associated Press and other media. "'Who did this? Why would anyone do this?'" The boy eventually admits to having pulled the trigger Nov. 5. As the video wraps up, he buries his head in his jacket. "I'm going to go to juvie," the boy says after an officer asks what he's thinking. At one point, the boy told authorities he had been mad at his father. He said he was supposed to bring home some papers from school earlier in the week and got spanked by his stepmother at his father's request because he didn't.

Astronauts end space walk marred by lost tool bag

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—A spacewalking astronaut accidentally let go of her tool bag Tuesday after a grease gun inside it exploded, and helplessly watched as the tote and everything inside floated away. It was one of the largest items ever to be lost by a spacewalker, and occurred during an unprecedented attempt to clean and lube a gummed-up joint at the international space station. Heidemarie Stefanyshyn-Piper was just starting to work on the joint when the mishap occurred. She said her grease gun exploded, getting the dark gray stuff all over a camera and her gloves. While she was wiping everything off, the white, backpack-size bag slipped out of her grip, and she lost all her tools. "Oh, great," she mumbled. She and her fellow spacewalker, Stephen Bowen, then finished their tasks in almost seven hours by sharing tools. Bowen had his own tool bag with another set of grease guns, putty knives and oven-like terry cloth mitts to wipe away metal grit from the joint.

Jonestown memorial unveiled on 30th anniversary

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—On the 30th anniversary of the Jonestown disaster Tuesday, organizers of an annual memorial service displayed the first panels of a 36-foot-long stone wall that is to be inscribed with the names of more than 900 victims of the violence in Guyana. In the years since, efforts to create a monument have dragged on for lack of funding. But the Rev. Jynona Norwood on Tuesday pulled covers from two shiny black granite slabs on sturdy trailers parked at Evergreen Cemetery, where more than 400 unidentified and unclaimed bodies of Jonestown's victims are buried in a mass grave. Mourners gasped and tearful survivors scattered red and black carnations on the panels. "Touch their names because touching their names is very healing," said Norwood, who lost 27 relatives in the 1978 mass murders and suicides orchestrated by Peoples Temple founder Jim Jones. "Finally, they have a resting place." The work for the memorial, however, is far from complete.

Asia

Officials report US missile strike in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A suspected U.S. missile attack well inside Pakistani territory Wednesday killed at least six alleged militants, intelligence officials said, but the attack could exacerbate tensions between the anti-terror allies.

The missile struck a house in Indi Khel village in Bannu, which is part of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province and neighbors semiautonomous tribal areas that have borne the brunt of past such strikes.

Two Pakistani intelligence officials said their agents reported foreigners from Central Asia were among the dead. The intelligence officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to media.

The U.S. is blamed in around 20 missile strikes in northwest Pakistan since mid-August.

Pakistan has loudly protested the strikes as violations of its sovereignty but so far the attacks have not stopped, leading to speculation that the U.S. and Pakistan have a secret deal on the cross-border attacks.

The U.S. rarely acknowledges or comments on the strikes. The missiles are believed to be fired from unmanned planes launched in Afghanistan, where some 32,000 U.S. troops are fighting a resurgent Taliban insurgency.

The strikes since August have almost exclusively been reported in North and South Waziristan, two regions within Pakistan's semiautonomous tribal regions that are considered havens for al-Qaida and Taliban linked fighters.

Pakistani officials have said the strikes are counterproductive because they often kill civilians and simply deepen anti-American sentiment along the border.

But U.S. Gen. David Petraeus has defended them, saying at least three top extremist leaders have been killed in recent months due to the attacks.

AP

Residents stand on the rubble of shops and a house damaged in the fighting between Pakistan army and militants in Kanju, a troubled area of Pakistan's Swat Valley, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008.

Taiwan's Chen returned to jail from hospital

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Former Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian was returned to his jail cell Wednesday, even as the hospital treating him said the ex-leader was extending his hunger strike into an eighth day.

Chen, 57, has refused solid food since early Nov. 12, after judges ordered him locked up while prosecutors pursue bribery and other graft allegations against him.

He was moved from jail late Sunday to a nearby hospital and then to a bigger medical facility the next day, after suffering from an irregular heartbeat.

On Tuesday he accepted glucose and saline injections to stabilize his deteriorating condition.

Just after 1 P.M. local time Wednesday (GMT 0500) TV pictures showed an ambulance carrying Chen pulling up at the entrance to Tucheng Jail outside Taipei.

Earlier, jail official Lee Tachu told The Associated Press that the facility dispatched staff to fetch Chen from the hospital.

"The hospital told us it will release (Chen) to us," Lee said. "We have sent staff to carry out the procedure and bring him back."

On Wednesday morning Dr. Yang Chang-bin at the hospital where Chen was being treated told reporters that his condition had improved, although "former President Chen is still refusing to eat."

In August, Chen admitted he broke the law by not fully disclosing campaign donations he had received, after a Nationalist lawmaker alleged that Chen's son and daughter-in-law moved $21 million to Switzerland in 2007.

Prosecutors believe Chen may have amassed millions of dollars more and say they have enough evidence to hold him as they prepare a formal indictment. They have denied that the government has interfered in the case—charges that Chen supporters have made.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Muslim rebels claim airstrike by RP air force targeted civilians

COTABATO, Philippines (AP)—Muslim rebels accused Philippine troops of killing one and wounding four civilians, including a 12-year-old girl, in an airstrike, but a military spokesman said Wednesday that the strike targeted only guerrillas. Military officials said government forces who have been chasing three rebel commanders blamed for recent clashes in the southern Philippines called in an airstrike Tuesday on a guerrilla camp in Mamasapano town in Maguinandao province. Military spokesman Maj. Randolph Cabangbang denied the airstrike hurt any civilians, saying, "If somebody got killed, for sure he is a member" of the rebel group. He said troops on the ground had a clear view of the target when the planes struck. But the chief negotiator for the rebel Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Mohagher Iqbal, said the bombing killed a 30-year-old man and wounded a 12-year-old girl. Three others were hurt, he said. "It's unacceptable. The military has been indiscriminately bombing Muslim populated areas," he said.

Reports: Japan police probe ex-bureaucrat attacks

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese police posted guards at the homes of former health ministry bureaucrats Tuesday after attacks on the families of ex-officials left two people dead and another wounded, reports said. A former vice health minister and his wife were stabbed to death Tuesday in Saitama, some 40 kilometers (25 miles) northwest of Tokyo, police said. Takehiko Yamaguchi, 66, and his wife Michiko, 61, were found dead in their home with several stab wounds to their chests, a Saitama police spokesman said, on condition of anonymity, citing department policy. Hours later, the wife of another former vice health minister was stabbed by a man at their home in Tokyo, Kyodo News agency and public broadcaster NHK reported. The man had pretended to be a delivery man, and when the woman opened the door he stabbed her in the chest several times before running away, NHK said.

Human Rights Watch: Nepalese police have tortured children in custody

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—Nepalese police allegedly tortured children in their custody, an international rights group said, calling the practice widespread and asking the government to punish the officers involved. New York-based Human Rights Watch said they have "received credible claims of more than 200 cases of torture or abuse committed by members of the Nepali police against boys and girls in 2008, some as young as 13." Ekmani Nepal, senior official at the Home Ministry, said they have no reports of children being tortured by police. He also denied any children were being held by police. "The government does not have any policy to keep children in detention. There may be cases where some minor who have been taken in custody for petty crimes but they are freed immediately," he said. The report, released Tuesday in New York, said most of the children were suspected of minor crimes or were living or working on the streets, and that some of them were tortured to extract confessions.

China stance on Tibet clouds exile talks in India

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese leaders on Tuesday warned Tibetan exiles considering whether to push for Tibet's independence that any bid to separate the Himalayan region from China was "doomed."

The government's comments came as more than 500 Tibetan exile leaders in India held all-day private talks in their first major re-evaluation of their strategy toward China in two decades.

The Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, has long advocated a "middle way"—seeking autonomy for the territory without independence—but he has grown frustrated in recent days over fruitless talks with China.

Deviating from that policy would almost certainly scuttle already tenuous relations with Beijing, which has long accused the Dalai Lama of fomenting an independence movement in Tibet.

"Any attempt to separate Tibet from Chinese territory will be doomed," China's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Qin Gang, told reporters. "The so-called Tibet government-in-exile is not recognized by any government in the world."

The Dalai Lama called the weeklong meeting in the northern India hill town of Dharmsala, the base of Tibet's self-proclaimed government-in-exile, so Tibetan exiles could reevaluate his Nobel Peace prize-winning "middle way." He was not expected to attend, having said he did not want to tilt the debate.

"This meeting is not about taking Tibet away from China," Thupten Samphel, spokesman for the Tibetan government-in-exile, said in response to Qin's comments. "It's about restoring the human rights of Tibetan people living in Tibet."

China has dismissed the meeting as meaningless, contending the participants do not represent the views of most Tibetans.

1,000 protesters storm Chinese government building

BEIJING (AP)—A crowd of 1,000 people stormed a local Communist Party headquarters in northwest China, smashing cars and clashing with police following a land dispute, government officials said Tuesday.

At least 60 people—officials, police, and protesters—were injured in the riots, according to a statement on the government Web site of Longnan city, where the unrest occurred.

The protest initially began Monday with just a small group of people complaining about the demolition of their homes to make way for a new road in Longnan in Gansu province, according to an official from the local Communist Party surnamed Wang.

But by nightfall, the crowd swelled to as many as 1,000 as more people joined the demonstration, the city's statement said.

"Instigated by a small number of people with ulterior motives, some unlawful people started to storm the city government building and attacked government officials from the petitioning office," it said.

Protesters attacked police and officials with stones, steel pipes and bricks. They also set fire to motorcycles, bicycles and buildings, according to the statement.

After attempting to calm the crowd, police "had no option but to disperse the unlawful elements with force," it said.

By early Tuesday morning, the situation was "under control," said Wang, who like many Chinese officials would give only his surname.

World

Tanker capture raises alarm over Somali piracy

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—It seems inconceivable: Somali pirates in speedboats foil warships from the world's most powerful navies to prey on shipping lanes crucial to the oil supply.

How do they do it? Basically, it's a big ocean and no one wants to be top cop.

NATO and the U.S. Navy say they can't be everywhere, and American officials are urging ships to hire private security. Warships patrolling off Somalia have succeeded in stopping some pirate attacks. But military assaults to wrest back a ship are highly risky and, to this point, uncommon.

Yet when pirates took their biggest prize to date over the weekend—a Saudi supertanker carrying $100 million worth of crude oil—it raised the stakes dramatically. The pirates struck hundreds of miles off the coast of East Africa, far out to sea where ships were presumed to be safe.

■■■

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP)—Pirates hijacked a Thai fishing boat with 16 crew members Tuesday off the coast of Somalia, the same day a major Norwegian shipping group ordered its tankers to sail around Africa rather than use the Suez Canal because pirates had seized a Saudi supertanker.

The U.S. and other naval forces decided against intervening in the seizure of the supertanker, which was carrying $100 million in crude. The pirates captured an Iranian cargo ship Tuesday—the eighth ship seized in 12 days.

Odfjell SE said it made the decision to divert its ships after pirates seized the Saudi Arabian supertanker MV *Sirius Star* Saturday hundreds of miles off the coast of Kenya, the most brazen attack yet by Somalian pirates.

"We will no longer expose our crew to the risk of being hijacked and held for ransom by pirates in the Gulf of Aden," said Terje Storeng, Odfjell's president and chief executive. "Unless we are explicitly committed by existing contracts to sail through this area, as from today we will reroute our ships around Cape of Good Hope."

■■■

Shippers and insurance companies that once minimized piracy's risks—at worse, pay a ransom, get your ship, crew and cargo back unharmed—have now awakened to the potential economic impact. The turmoil could force cargo ships and tankers to take longer routes around Africa, drive up costs and, though it hasn't happened yet, even raise oil prices.

"For a long time I thought this piracy thing was complete nonsense ... isolated incidents being blown up," Giles Merritt, director of the Security & Defense Agenda, a Brussels, Belgium-based think tank on security issues.

Not anymore, he said.

"It's unbelievable to me that we can run AWACS aircraft that can tell you anything that is moving," Merritt said. "But apparently we cannot spot small boats full of chaps with machine guns."

AP

This undated picture made at an unknown location shows the MV *Sirius Star* a Saudi oil supertanker which has been hijacked by Somali pirates.

Aruba police pursue new evidence in Holloway case

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—A new witness has come forward in the 2005 disappearance of American teenager Natalee Holloway in Aruba, and prosecutors said Tuesday they are seeking more evidence against the only remaining suspect.

A woman told Dutch police this month that Joran van der Sloot confessed to her years ago that he was involved in Holloway's disappearance, according to Ann Angela, a spokeswoman for the Aruba Prosecutors' Office.

But the Dutch Caribbean island's chief prosecutor said authorities still lack proof they need to convict Van der Sloot, who has been arrested twice and released for lack of evidence.

"After three years of investigating, it is very, very difficult to find that evidence," prosecutor Hans Mos told The Associated Press. "We have to be realistic."

Holloway, an 18-year-old from Mountain Brook, Alabama, was last seen in May 2005 leaving a bar in the Aruban capital Oranjestad with Van der Sloot on the final night of a high school graduation trip to the island. Extensive searches have found no trace of her.

AP

This poster which was prepared and released by the Holloway family after their daughter Natalee went missing is seen in this image originally made available by the Holloway family Friday, June 3, 2005.

Investigators reopened the case earlier this year based on hidden-camera recordings made by a Dutch TV crime show. On the video, Van der Sloot says Holloway collapsed on the beach after they left the bar and that he called a friend to dump her body at sea.

The new witness, once a friend of Van der Sloot, confirmed that he gave her roughly the same account shortly after Holloway's disappearance. But Mos said her statement does not bring authorities any closer to resolving the case.

He also said the witness would lack credibility in court unless she explains why she waited so long to come forward.

Attorneys for Van der Sloot did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment and there was no answer at his parents' home in Aruba.

Van der Sloot was last known to be living in Thailand but his current whereabouts are a "mystery," Angela said.

Angela said Aruban authorities hope to decide by the end of this year whether to prosecute Van der Sloot or close the case for good.

Natalee Holloway's mother, Beth Holloway, did not immediately return a telephone call Tuesday seeking comment.

Congo rebels to pull back to allow talks

KAYNA, Congo (AP)—Rebels were pulling back their forces from the frontlines to allow talks with the army, their spokesman said Tuesday, as retreating army soldiers battled mobs of spear-wielding militiamen.

Streams of machine-gunfire crackled through the rural hilltop village of Kayna all day as so-called Mai Mai militias attacked government soldiers who had been fleeing a rebel advance further south. The army reported similar clashes with the militia in Kirumba, a few miles further north.

Tuesday's violence marked another low in the complex crisis that is Congo. It also has dealt a severe blow to the army, which relies on help from the Mai Mai in its broader war with rebel leader Laurent Nkunda.

Fighting between the army and Nkunda's men since August has forced hundreds of thousands of people from homes into crowded displaced camps. The U.N. puts the total refugee figure at 250,000, but tens of thousands have also deserted Kanya and Kanyabayonga, which are occupied by now exclusively by soldiers and their families.

Rebels have advanced close to Kanyabayonga, perched on a mountain ridge around 10 miles (15 kilometers) south of Kayna.

Nkunda launched a rebellion in 2004, claiming to protect ethnic Tutsis from Hutu militias who fled to Congo after Rwanda's 1994 genocide left more than 500,000 Tutsis and others slaughtered. But critics say he is more interested in power and Congo's mineral wealth.

Doctors transplant windpipe with stem cells

LONDON (AP)—Doctors have given a woman a new windpipe with tissue grown from her own stem cells, eliminating the need for anti-rejection drugs. "This technique has great promise," said Dr. Eric Genden, who did a similar transplant in 2005 at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York. That operation used both donor and recipient tissue. Only a handful of windpipe, or trachea, transplants have ever been done.

If successful, the procedure could become a new standard of treatment, said Genden, who was not involved in the research.

The results were published online Wednesday in the medical journal, The Lancet.

The transplant was given to Claudia Castillo, a 30-year-old Colombian mother of two living in Barcelona, suffered from tuberculosis for years. After a severe collapse of her left lung in March, Castillo needed regular hospital visits to clear her airways and was unable to take care of her children.

Doctors initially thought the only solution was to remove the entire left lung. But Dr. Paolo Macchiarini, head of thoracic surgery at Barcelona's Hospital Clinic, proposed a windpipe transplant instead.

Once doctors had a donor windpipe, scientists at Italy's University of Padua stripped off all its cells, leaving only a tube of connective tissue.

WORLD BRIEFS

Iraq PM tries to rally support for security pact

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's prime minister delivered a nationally televised address Tuesday to rally domestic support for a U.S.-Iraqi security pact, calling it a step toward full sovereignty and assuring neighbors it will prevent cross-border attacks. Hours earlier, Iraq said it will hold provincial elections Jan. 31 for the first time since 2005, when the country was in chaos. The vote will be another move for national reconciliation because the Sunni Arab minority that boycotted the polls last time is taking part. The ballot also could come with a clear timetable for a U.S. withdrawal in place, if parliament approves the security pact in a vote scheduled for Nov. 24. The agreement would keep U.S. troops in Iraq through 2011 but put them under strict Iraqi oversight for the first time since they led an invasion five years ago. In his speech, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki described it as imperfect but necessary.

US arrests suspected Iranian agent in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—The U.S. military says it has arrested an alleged senior member of the Iranian security forces suspected of funneling weapons into Iraq. The military says in a statement released Wednesday that the alleged member of Iran's Revolutionary Guards' elite Quds force was detained at Baghdad Airport while trying to leave the country on Tuesday. The military says the suspect was using a job building and repairing religious sites in Iraq as cover to funnel weapons into the country. The U.S. alleges the Iranian was smuggling weapons into Iraq in legitimate shipments of building materials. The U.S. has long accused Iran of training and arming Shiite extremist groups in Iraq and fueling the insurgency. Tehran denies the charges.

Peacekeepers pushing Darfur rebels to ceasefire

EL FASHER, Sudan (AP)—A senior commander of international peacekeepers in Darfur said Tuesday the mission is encouraging rebel groups to accept a government cease-fire offer—a task made difficult by recent violence. Maj. Gen. Emmanuelle Karenzi, deputy commander of the joint U.N.-African Union peacekeeping mission, said an investigation is under way into conflicting claims by the government and rebels over who is to blame for recent violence in northern Darfur, but he said the violence should not derail a cease-fire. "It is unfortunate," Karenzi said in his office at UNAMID headquarters in El Fasher. "But ... if the people have been fighting and one of the parties just declares a cease-fire, it is not like you are switching on and off your lights in the house. You will have incidents like this." Rebels took up arms in Sudan's western Darfur region in 2003, citing neglect and marginalization by the central government. So far 300,000 people have died and 2.7 million have been displaced.

Environment

Green entertaining: stylish, affordable and responsible

CNMI Organization for Conservation Outreach

Entertaining doesn't have to be boring or unstylish. In fact, we can strive to throw a party that is both creative and environmentally responsible.

Stuffing plastic plates, discarded invitations and leftover food into big black garbage bags is always the most guilt-inducing part of entertaining. Simply plan ahead and put in a little extra effort.

Here are some environmentally friendly suggestions to consider for your next big celebration.

Go green with your theme

You probably already have some knick knacks on hand, so take stock in what you and your party assistants (friends) already have. You'd be amazed at the creativity everyday things can be transformed to spectacular décor.

You're invited!

Instead of traditional mailed invitations, consider less formal alternatives. Contact your friends over the phone or through e-mail or text message. If you prefer sending out invitations, use cardstock made of recycled paper.

Arrange carpooling

As the organizer of the party, you'll know best who is coming from where. Where possible, arrange carpools for people who live in the same village.

Buy local or grow your own

Buying local products reduces the energy spent on refrigeration and transportation. It's also a good idea to buy in-season produce.

If you'll be catering, provide the caterers with your own reusable serving dishes instead of using disposable aluminum or Styrofoam containers. You'll also have less waste at the end of the party and less waste means less time cleaning up.

If you are grilling, use natural charcoal or propane. Not only is the natural version free of harmful chemicals added to many charcoals, but many products are sustainably harvested.

Suck up your soda with a licorice stick

Use traditional plates and flatware instead of disposable plastic plates. For a fun twist, try using pieces of licorice instead of straws. Instead of using plastic corncob holders, cut sturdy twigs from your tree and use a pencil sharpener to make the ends pointy.

If you think imaginatively, you can craft some unconventional but inspiring finishing touches.

Adjust your thermostat

Find it tough to find the just-right temperature when you're entertaining? Before your guests arrive, turn the temperature down a few notches in winter. As more and more guests arrive, the room's temperature will rise and you won't have guests sneaking out to the front porch in search of fresh air.

If you're planning for an outdoor soiree, you've already reduced your carbon footprint.

Switch your lights

Trade your old incandescent lights for energy-efficient LED decorative lights. The bright lights, which are available in a range of colors, use 95 per cent less energy than conventional lights and last 10 times longer.

In addition to candles, another option for outdoor lighting is using solar-powered tiki torches or lanterns. These are now available for purchase on island at select hardware/department stores.

Gifts and party favors

For a child's birthday party, fill a brown paper bag with small candies, riddles, and joke books.

For adults, bring a potted plant or a consumable gift that you know the recipient will actually use, such as candles, chocolates, homemade cookies, or passes for a movie. Besides being practical, consumable gifts reduce clutter.

Recycle

Remember that aluminum cans are recycled more efficiently than plastic. Have a separate bin or bag for recyclables and ensure guests know not to toss recyclable materials.

Compost the leftovers

If you buy conservatively, you shouldn't end up with excess food at the end of the night, but sometimes, estimating proper amounts of food can be difficult. If you do end up with a mass of leftovers, create take-home packages for guests who will be sure to appreciate them. Leftovers that spoil can be composted and used in your garden.

Source *http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/consumers/eco-entertaining.html*

Eat local this Thanksgiving

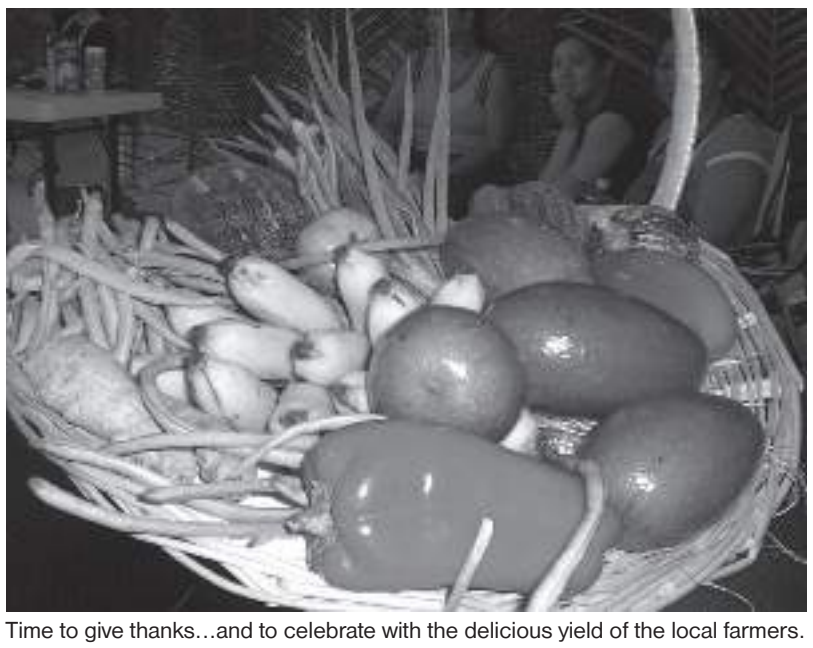
Time to give thanks...and to celebrate with the delicious yield of the local farmers.

Three Big Reasons to Eat Local Food

Eating local means more for the local economy. A dollar spent locally can generate twice as much income for the local economy. When you buy local, you give those with local open space—farms and pastures—an economic reason to stay open and undeveloped.

Locally grown produce is fresher; tastes better. While produce that is purchased in the supermarket or a big-box store has been in transit or cold-stored for days or weeks, produce that you purchase at your local farmer's market has often been picked within 24 hours of your purchase. This freshness not only affects the taste of your food, but the nutritional value which declines with time.

Eating local is better for air quality and pollution. Local produce doesn't require the multitude of pesticides and insecticides to withstand the shipping time. Also, the miles that organic food often travels to our plate create environmental damage that outweighs the benefit of buying organic. ***(PR)***



Time to give thanks…and to celebrate with the delicious yield of the local farmers.

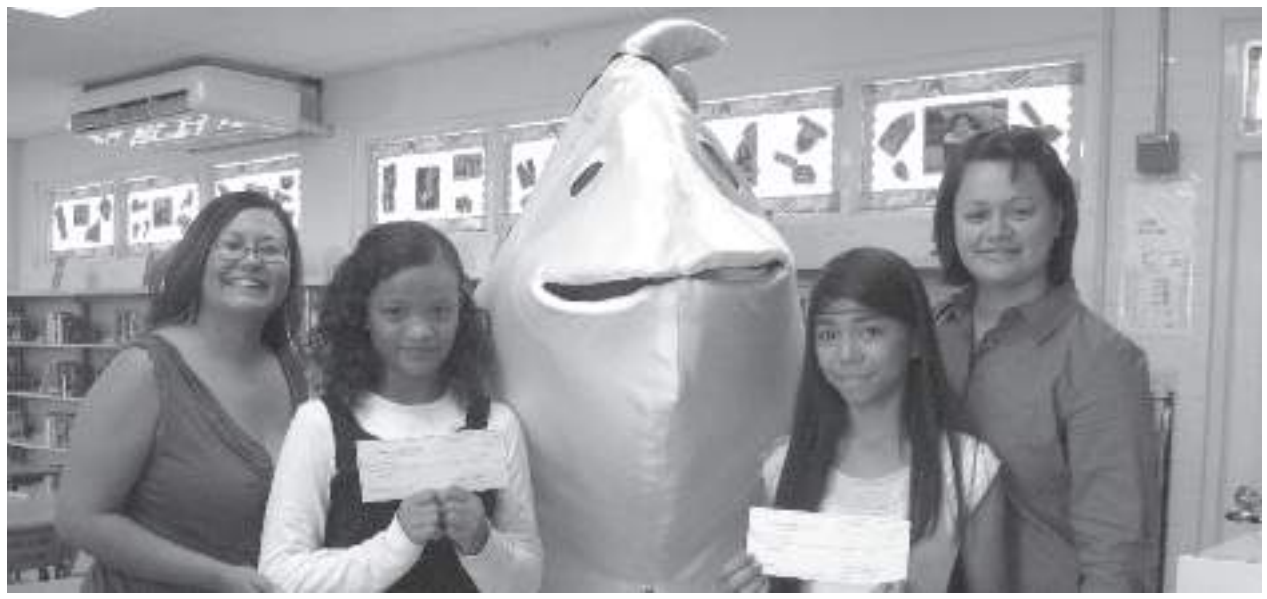
Limited edition MPA coasters; collect all 5

When was the last time you visited Managaha, Puna Point, Bird Island, Taga Beach, or Forbidden Island? These places are some of the beautiful spots that form the CNMI's Marine Protected Area network. This week, the Pride Campaign will initiate a distribution of limited-edition coasters that highlight these selected CNMI scenic locations.

The coasters feature Primo, the Yellow Crowned Butterflyfish, our Pride Campaign logo. The Yellow Crowned Butterflyfish is found only in the Marianas—nowhere else in the world. Primo's mission is to provide information about how important it is to protect CNMI coral reefs.

These limited edition coasters will not be around for long. Be sure to collect all five!

For more information, contact the Pride Campaign Manager, Brooke Nevitt at Coastal Resources Management Office, 664-8320. ***(PR)***



MICRONESIA CHALLENGE WINNERS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Katrina Castro and Samantha Marquez were declared winners of the Micronesia Challenge drawing and essay contest. Castro and Marqueze pose with their $50 check with Primo, the Yellow-Crowned Butterfly Fish and CNMI Rare Pride Mascot. Also in photo is Reina Camacho, DEQ representative and Christine Masga, principal for Hopwood Jr. High School.

EDUCATION MONTH CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Last Friday, Primo was able to join Oleai Elementary School students, faculty and parents celebrate Education Month along the Beach Road Pathway.

Life & Style

South African cartoonist makes light of Mandela

By CELEAN JACOBSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

AP

South African cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro talks during an interview with the Associated Press at the Nelson Mandela Foundation in Johannesburg, South Africa, Tuesday Nov. 18, 2008.

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP)—Don't worry, Nelson Mandela can laugh at himself.

At least that's the opinion of Jonathan Shapiro, South Africa's leading political cartoonist for 20 years, whose work has not shied away from ridiculing the foibles of the anti-apartheid icon.

In Shapiro's latest exhibit, the South African leader is shown as more famous than the British Queen, as an elderly statesman with greater stamina than an Olympic sprinter and as a saint, albeit with his halo slipping.

The exhibit opened Tuesday at Mandela's Johannesburg offices as part of yearlong celebrations of the former South African president's 90th birthday.

Much of the work lauds Mandela's role as national liberator and reconciler of South Africa's multicultural "rainbow nation." There are cartoons of him bending over backward to meet the widow of Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoed, regarded as the architect of apartheid.

There are also poignant drawings of Mandela's farewell speech when he stepped down as South Africa's first black president in 1999, and of his announcement of his son's death from AIDS.

"Mandela embodies the greatest things that came out of the struggle (against apartheid) and since democracy," Shapiro, who signs his work Zapiro, told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "It is this spirit I have tried to tap into."

But even Mandela has not been immune from Shapiro's razor sharp drawings skewering politicians.

"It's fantastic to have the opportunity as a cartoonist, as a satirist, to criticize an icon like Mandela and know that he understands that criticism," Shapiro said, adding that Mandela and others have told him how much the statesman enjoys his work.

The exhibition contains cartoons lambasting Mandela for foreign policy missteps during his reign, most notably when he accepted an award from former Indonesian dictator Suharto.

The portrayal of Mandela as a saint with his halo askew was in response to his domestic policy gaffes, including calling for 14-year-olds to have the vote.

"He has said he is not a saint and I felt I had to be critical of him," Shapiro said. "I owed it to myself and to him."

After a stint in the South African army, Shapiro became politically active and used his art to promote Mandela's then-banned African National Congress party and other anti-apartheid groups.

For his troubles, he was arrested and detained. While in jail, Shapiro did a drawing of what he thought Mandela looked like. Pictures of the imprisoned Mandela had been banned for decades and so few people saw him until he was released in 1990.

"I have been influenced and driven by him," Shapiro said. "It has been a strange and wonderful relationship—mostly praising him and occasionally sniping at him from the sidelines."

Today, Shapiro continues to ridicule a new breed of politicians. He is unrepentant in his depiction of ANC leader Jacob Zuma with a shower coming out of his head and is being sued by Zuma, the man likely to be the country's next president. Zuma has said he took a shower as a preventive measure after having sex with an HIV-positive woman.

Cartoons in the exhibition also show Mandela chastising successor Thabo Mbeki for dragging his heels on HIV/AIDS issues and warning him against sowing seeds of division within the ruling party.

"Increasingly, he became the conscience of the nation," Shapiro said.

Mother sues author daughter over abuse claims

By JILL LAWLESS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LONDON (AP)—Another best-selling memoir, another battle over the line between truth and fiction.

A British lawyer who wrote a popular book recounting a childhood of emotional and physical abuse is being sued for libel by her mother, who says the claims are fantasy.

Constance Briscoe defends the veracity of her book, "Ugly"—the nickname she says her mother threw at her as a child. Her lawyer told London's High Court on Tuesday that the book contained some errors but was "quite properly put in the biography section of the bookshop, not the fiction section."

With its harrowing, inspirational and ostensibly true story, "Ugly" has sold more than half a million copies in Britain since it was published in 2006. It was followed by a sequel, "Beyond Ugly."

The child of Jamaican immigrants, Briscoe, 51, grew up in a poor part of London but went on to become a lawyer and one of the first black women in Britain to be appointed a recorder, or part-time judge.

In "Ugly," Briscoe alleges that her mother regularly beat and starved her before abandoning her when she was 13.

The book claims Briscoe's stepfather once stubbed a cigarette out on her hand, and says that as a teenager Briscoe needed surgery on her breasts because of trauma caused by her mother's assaults.

Her mother, Carmen Briscoe-Mitchell, 74, says these and other harrowing incidents are fiction. She is seeking damages from Briscoe and her publisher, Hodder and Stoughton.

Briscoe-Mitchell's lawyer, William Panton, told the court the allegations of abuse were "nonsense" and said that as a child Briscoe had not complained to police, social services or teachers.

"There were opportunities to complain about ill-treatment—if that ill-treatment had in fact taken place," he said.

Briscoe-Mitchell wept on the witness stand Tuesday as she refuted her daughter's account. "It was a happy family, a very happy family," she said.

"My children were my pride and joy."

Briscoe's lawyer, Andrew Caldecott, showed jurors medical forms, tax records and other documents he said backed up Briscoe's claims that she was the victim of "sustained cruelty."

"If the book is from pillar to post a work of fiction, it is a quite extraordinarily wicked thing to do, or a mad thing to do," Caldecott said.

"We say it is a book which has its share of errors, but it was quite properly put in the biography section of the bookshop, not the fiction section."

The court case is expected to last two weeks.

Heart-rending "misery memoirs" are a booming genre in publishing, and this is not the first time an autobiography's truth has been questioned.

American writer Augusten Burroughs was sued by the family depicted in "Running With Scissors," his 2002 book about a bizarre and chaotic upbringing. The case was settled out of court, with Burroughs and his publisher agreeing to call the work a "book" instead of "memoirs."

U.S. author James Frey faced condemnation in 2006 when his best-selling addiction memoir "A Million Little Pieces" was shown to have been substantially fabricated.

Earlier this year Ishmael Beah, author of a best-selling memoir about his time as a boy soldier in Sierra Leone, denied claims that he exaggerated his war service.

One of the most notorious cases involved Belgian-born, U.S.-based writer Misha Defonseca's 1997 book, "Misha: A Memoire of the Holocaust Years," an extraordinary story of a child's survival during the Holocaust that was translated into 18 languages and made into a French feature film. Earlier this year Defonseca admitted that she had never lived with wolves to escape the Nazis, as the book claims, had not walked 3,000 miles across Europe in search of her parents—and isn't even Jewish.

'Suge' Knight faces Vegas drug, battery charges

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Marion "Suge" Knight is facing criminal charges in Las Vegas, stemming from an incident in which police found the hip hop mogul allegedly beating his girlfriend just off a busy thoroughfare.

Knight

Knight is charged with two counts of felony drug possession and one count of misdemeanor battery, according to a criminal complaint filed Tuesday in Las Vegas Justice Court.

The complaint filed by the Clark County district attorney's office accuses Knight of striking a woman identified as Melissa Isaac. Police say they arrested Knight in August after they saw the founder of bankrupt Death Row Records beating the woman while brandishing a knife in a parking lot near the Las Vegas Strip.

Authorities said the woman wasn't stabbed, but was treated at a hospital for injuries. The complaint says Knight was carrying Ecstasy and hydrocodone when they arrested him. Knight was later released after posting $19,000 bail.

Defense attorney Richard Schonfeld said Knight planned to enter a not guilty plea at his arraignment Dec. 16.

"We're going to vigorously defend him against these charges," Schonfeld said.

Knight could face mandatory probation and up to four years in a Nevada state prison on each of the drug charges. He could be sentenced to up to six months in jail on the battery charge.

Knight's Death Row Records was known for releasing seminal gangster rap albums by Tupac Shakur, Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg. It sold tens of millions of albums in the heyday of early 1990s rap.

In 2006, a federal judge ordered a bankruptcy trustee takeover of Death Row Records, saying the label had undergone gross mismanagement. Knight's decision to file for bankruptcy protection staved off a move by the court to appoint someone to take control of the record label and his assets.

The record company was auctioned in June for $24 million to New York-based Global Music Group Inc.

Mexican mural sells for nearly $7M at NYC auction

AP

This photo provided by Sotheby's New York shows Mexican artist Rufino Tamayo's 1955 mural "America", which will be offered for sale at Sotheby's auction of Latin American art Tuesday evening, Nov. 18, 2008.

NEW YORK (AP)—A mural by Mexican artist Rufino Tamayo—one of five exhibited in the United States still in private hands—was sold Tuesday for nearly $7 million at an auction of Latin American art.

"America," measuring 13 feet by 15 feet, fetched $6.8 million, just below its pre-sale estimate of $7 million to $9 million, a spokeswoman for Sotheby's auction house said. The buyer's identity wasn't released.

The lower-than-expected price echoed the slowdown in the art auction market in recent weeks. The buying habits of wealthy collectors have been shifting as they confront the global financial crisis.

In May, Tamayo's "Troubadour" sold for $7.2 million at Christie's, setting an auction record for the artist and Latin American artwork. Frida Khalo's "Roots" previously held the Latin American record when it sold for $5.6 million at Sotheby's in 2006.

"America" is Tamayo's biggest mural, said Carmen Melian, director of Sotheby's Latin American art department. It was commissioned in 1955 by the Bank of Southwest in Houston, where it hung until the early 1990s. It was bought by an anonymous private collector in 1993 and has since been on loan at the Dallas Museum of Art.

"America" is an allegorical work depicting the heritage and cultural richness of the Americas. Its central figure is America, personified by a reclining female nude surrounded by natural resources.

Bush honors arts medalists

President George W. Bush honored nine recipients of the 2008 National Medal of the Arts, managed by the National Endowment for the Arts, at a ceremony in the East Room of the White House on Monday.

Among those presented with the medals by the president and first lady Laura Bush were Los Angeles comic-book writer and producer Stan Lee, the man behind Spider-Man, the Incredible Hulk and the X-Men, and Academy Award-winning songwriting brothers Robert B. and Richard M. Sherman, who wrote the music for several Disney films, including "The Jungle Book" and "The Aristocats," and won two Oscars for "Mary Poppins."

Also receiving arts medals were actress Olivia de Havilland; the Fisk Jubilee singers of Nashville, Tenn.; the Ford's Theatre Society, theater and museum, Washington, D.C.; jazz musician Hank Jones, who was named NEA Jazz Master in 1989; the Jose Limon Dance Foundation, company and institute, New York City; granite sculptor Jesus Moroles of Rockport, Texas; and the Presser Foundation, music patron, of Haverford, Pa. ***(Los Angeles Times)***

IN CELEBRATION OF HER NEW LIFE

Soledad Acosta Blas

Better know as **"Daling Jesus Salaban"**

DOB : November 22, 1945 • DOD: November 15, 2008

She now joins:
Husband: †Jesus Basa Blas
Son: †Joseph Acosta Blas
Parents: †Jesus N. Acosta &
†Veronica N. Acosta
Parents-In-Law: †Pedro S. Blas & Guadalupe B. Blas
Brothers-In-Law: †Francisco N. Acosta
†Antonio N. Acosta
†Juan D. San Augustin
†Calistro A. Crisostomo
Brother & Sister In-Law:
†Manuel S. Matagolai,
†Maria B. & Vicente P. Manibusan,
†Caridad B. Blas,
†Jose M. Mangloña

Survived by:
Son: Patrick Acosta Blas
(Menchang T. Lieto)
Grandson: Patricio A. Blas II

Brother/Sister & their Spouses:
Jose N. and Juana A. Acosta,
Carmen C. Acosta, Dolores A. and
Miguel P. Agulto, Ana A. Crisostomo,
Theresa A. San Augustin, Zeneida Acosta,
Rosa A. Ares, Margarita A. and Willy A. Brown.

Brothers/Sisters-In-Law:
Delgadina B. Matagolai
Teresita B. & Jose DLG Diaz,
Lucia B. & Antonio T. Mendiola,
Dolores B. Blas, Victorina B. &
Alejandro R. Cabrera, Casilda B. Blas,
Emiliana B. Mangloña, Asinta B. and
Augustin C. Pangelinan, Leonora A. Blas
and Willy Castro.

Reared:
Nick & Lucy T. Sablan
Marian DLG. Tudela

The body of the late Soledad A. Blas will arrive from the Philippines on Saturday morning, November 22nd at 1:15 am in the morning. She will be taken to the Borja Funeral Home in San Jose.

On Saturday, November 22, 2008, her remains will be escorted at 7:30 am from the Borja Funeral Home to San Vicente Church. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00am. Burial will follow at Chalan Kanoa Cemetary.

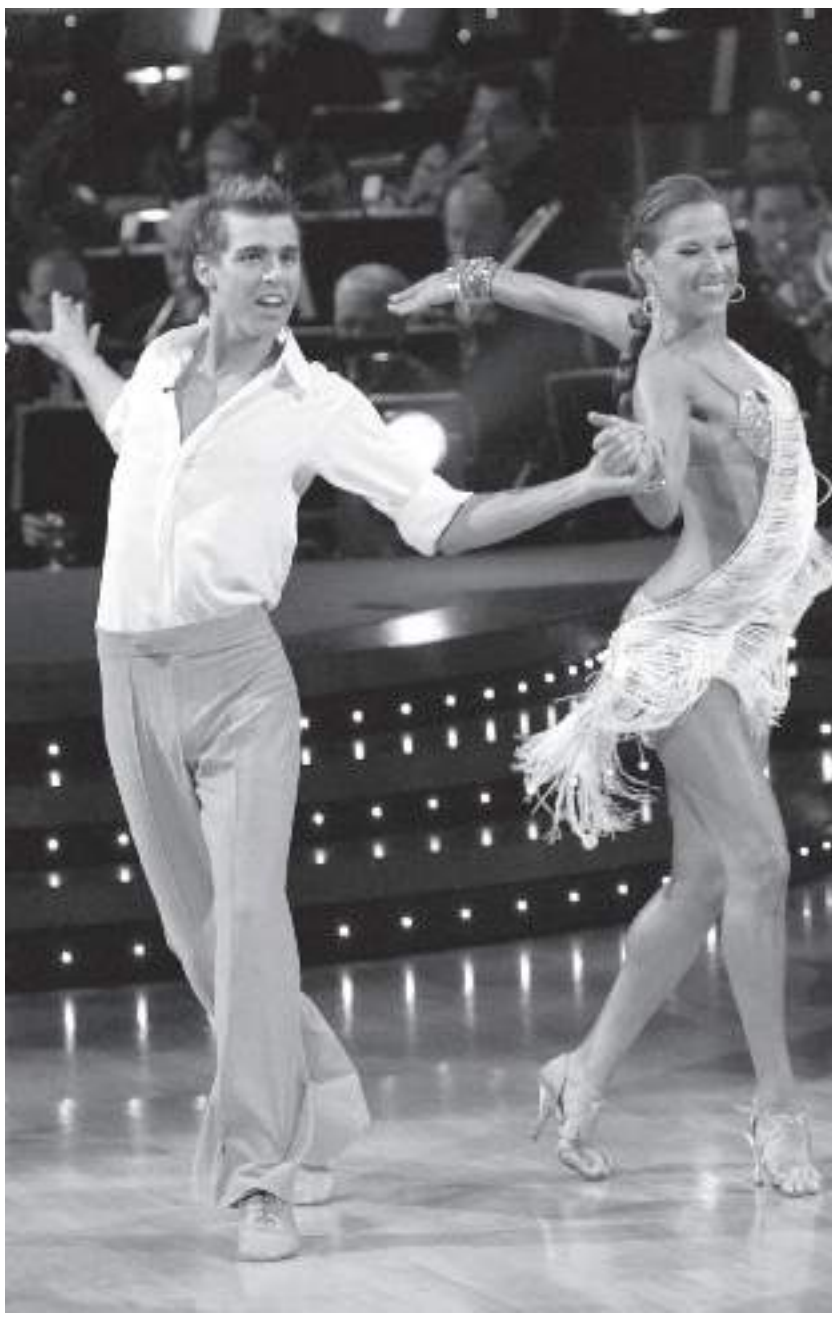
Thank you and Si Yu'us Ma'ase
The Family

Disney's Cody Linley doesn't make 'Dancing' finals

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Cody Linley won't be graduating "Dancing with the Stars."

The 18-year-old "Hannah Montana" actor and his professional partner, Julianne Hough, were eliminated Tuesday from ABC's popular dancing competition. The pair received a total score of 46 out of 60 from judges for their paso doble and salsa routines Monday. After viewer votes were combined with the judges' scores, the Disney actor was dismissed.

"Oh my gosh," a choked-up Linley said after his ouster. "I mean, words can't even explain the true amazing, growing, learning journey that I've had on this show. I can't show my appreciation anymore to Julianne. I can't say thank you. I love her so much. This opportunity has been so amazing."



In this image released by ABC, Cody Linley and his partner Edyta Sliwinska perform on "Dancing with the Stars," Monday, Nov. 10, 2008, in Los Angeles.

AP

For part of the competition, Linley was paired with professional dancer Edyta Sliwinska when Hough missed two weeks of competition because of surgery to remove her appendix. Hough rejoined Linley for Monday's semifinal round. The pair received the judge's lowest scores. After their paso doble routine, judge Bruno Tonioli said it was "not good enough."

"I'm so proud of you," Hough said to Linley before the duo took to the ballroom floor for their last dance. "I've had such an amazing time with you. This has probably been the biggest journey that any of these couples have had out here. I cannot wait to see what his opportunities are going to be after this show."

The three remaining contestants—model-actress Brooke Burke, singer Lance Bass and former NFL star Warren Sapp—will compete for the show's mirror ball trophy in next week's finals. On Monday, the celebrities will perform two routines, including one dance set to the same music for each couple. The seventh season champion will then be crowned Tuesday.

Previously dismissed celebrities include: Olympic sprinter Maurice Greene; actresses Susan Lucci and Cloris Leachman; singer Toni Braxton; chef Rocco DiSpirito; reality TV star Kim Kardashian; actor Ted McGinley and comedian Jeffrey Ross. Greene's fellow Olympian, volleyball player Misty May-Treanor, dropped out of the competition after rupturing a tendon.

Kidman: 'Australia' film fulfilled childhood dream

SYDNEY, Australia (AP)—It was hot and dusty during filming in one of the world's most remote locations. But Nicole Kidman says the prospect of a smooch with Hugh Jackman eased the troubles of working on the Outback romance, "Australia."

"Obviously we're in character when we kiss, but it was good to go to work," a laughing Kidman told a news conference Tuesday ahead of the worldwide premiere of the film, in which Kidman's prim British aristocrat character falls in love with Jackman's rugged cattleman in World War II-era Australia.

"It was hot. Literally hot," quipped Jackman, who first came to prominence in stage musicals and whose Hollywood star is rising thanks to films such as the "X-Men" franchise.

With a budget reportedly of $120 million or more—which would make it the most expensive ever made in Australia—the new film carries high stakes for its largely homegrown team, including director Baz Luhrmann, Kidman and Jackman.

"Rarely do you get to make a film that you've dreamed of doing since you were little, which is to be part of the Australian cinema. I haven't really had a film that's done that in a big way," Kidman said.

Much of the filming took place during the hot and humid summer months in northwestern Australia, on a remote ranch in the Kimberly region and in Darwin, where the characters become caught up in Japan's bombing raids.

Luhrmann, director of the colorful, eccentric "Moulin Rouge," said he wanted to create a period drama about "the far away," and on a more personal level, discover his home.

"We have amazing landscapes and historical events," Luhrmann said of Australia. "Epics are made of these things."

Oscar-winner Kidman, who has a 4-month-old girl with husband and country singer Keith Urban, said she wasn't sure what was next for her career.

"I'm in a place in my life where I've had some great opportunities, and I may just choose to have some more children," she said. "There's many things I want to do besides act."

More than 3,000 guests are expected to attend Tuesday night's premiere, and the usually busy street leading to the cinema in downtown Sydney was closed all day, causing downtown traffic snarls during rush hour. Officials rolled out a massive red carpet in front of the theater, and hundreds of people lined security fences hoping to catch a glimpse of the stars.

The movie is being simultaneously screened in three other Australian cities that were featured in the film—Darwin, Bowen and Kununurra. It opens internationally on Nov. 26, and the country's national and state tourism boards have launched worldwide campaigns in connection with the movie.

Australian actress Nicole Kidman walks the red carpet during the world premier for her latest film "Australia" in Sydney,Australia, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008.

AP

Lawyer: Michael Jackson may be too sick to travel

LONDON (AP)—Michael Jackson might be too sick to travel to London to testify in a suit claiming he owes an Arab sheik $7 million, the pop star's attorney said Tuesday.

Jackson is seeking to give his testimony by video link from the United States.

"It would be unwise for him to travel, given what's he's got now," lawyer Robert Englehart said, declining to elaborate "for the obvious reasons."

Jackson

A lawyer for Sheik Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa said the medical evidence presented by Jackson's legal team was unsatisfactory.

"It's not the first time a sick note has been presented by Mr. Jackson," the lawyer, Bankim Thanki said. He gave no precise indication of what the illness might be, but told the court that Jackson's condition could be treated with a bandage "if the diagnosis is positive."

Jackson has often been seen wearing a surgical mask in public. In one infamous court appearance in California, he appeared to have a bandage hanging from his hollowed-out nose.

Despite much speculation about his radically changed appearance over the years, he has denied having had any alterations to his face other than two operations on his nose to help him breathe better to hit higher notes.

The judge in the current case, Nigel Sweeney, said he would decide the question of Jackson's travel on Thursday to allow time for medical experts on both legal teams to talk.

Al Khalifa, the second son of the king of Bahrain, claims that Jackson reneged on a contract for an album, a candid autobiography and a stage play, after accepting millions from the sheik.

Al Khalifa was in court Tuesday for the second day of arguments and testimony.

The case is being tried in London by mutual agreement, Al Khalifa's representatives have said, and it is expected to close by the end of the month.

Jackson, 50, and the Bahraini royal first made contact when Jackson was fending off accusations of child molestation in California. Once Jackson was cleared of the charges, Al Khalifa, an amateur songwriter, invited him to the small, oil-rich Gulf state to escape the media spotlight.

Thanki said that the pair even moved in to the same palace to work on music together.

However, Jackson dropped the project in 2006, leaving Bahrain and pulling out of the contract, a move Al Khalifa considered a slap in the face, Thanki said.

"It's fair to say my client felt a considerable sense of betrayal by someone he thought was a close friend," he said. Thanki said Al Khalifa suffered financially too: Jackson's autobiography, intended to be "a frank and personal account" of the singer's life, was alone expected to rack up $24 million.

In the meanwhile, Al Khalifa had given Jackson millions of dollars to help shore up his finances and subsidize Jackson's lifestyle in the small Gulf state—including more than $300,000 for a "motivational guru."

Thanki said Al Khalifa considered the money an advance on the profits Jackson would reap from their pop music project, but Englehart said the money was a gift.

"Sheik Abdulla, fortunately for himself, had the resources to be so generous," Englehart said.

Englehart argued that Jackson wasn't bound by the deal he struck because the contract was technically signed on behalf of 2 Seas Records, a venture which never got off the ground.

"This (contract) was one brick in a building that was never built," Englehart said.

Spitzer prostitute sits down for TV interview

NEW YORK (AP)—The prostitute at the center of the salacious scandal that brought down former New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer and generated national headlines is going to dish on her life as a pricey escort.

ABC says Ashley Alexandra Dupre sat down with Diane Sawyer on the program "20/20."

Dupre reveals how an "upper middle-class, girl next door got into the profession and the psychological journey she continues to experience."

Spitzer resigned March 12 after it was disclosed he had used Emperors Club VIP. Dupre worked for the escort service.

On Thursday, federal prosecutors said they wouldn't bring criminal charges against Spitzer, marking the end of the saga.

Four people pleaded guilty to running the prostitution operation.

The show will air Friday at 10 p.m.

AP

In this image released by ABC, ABC correspondent Diane Sawyer sits with former call girl Ashley Dupre, left, whose tryst with former New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer, led to his resignation, during an interview, Nov. 13, 2008, in New York.

Apollo gets 'Dreamgirls' revival in November 2009

NEW YORK (AP)—A new national tour of "Dreamgirls" will kick off a year from now at Harlem's Apollo Theater, which is where the opening scene of the musical takes place.

The revival, directed and choreographed by Bobby Longbottom, will premiere in November 2009 at the legendary theater where many great entertainers including Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Sammy Davis Jr., and James Brown first won acclaim.

The show's producers will hold open auditions Saturday at the theater to cast the three Dreams, a female singing group that is the focus of the musical.

"The prospect that we may discover the Dreams at the Apollo, where so many stars were discovered, just adds to our excitement in bringing this great musical back to the stage," producer John Breglio said in a statement.

"Dreamgirls," which has music by Henry Krieger and book and lyrics by Tom Eyen, opened on Broadway in 1981 and featured Jennifer Holliday in the pivotal role of Effie White. It was directed and choreographed by Michael Bennett.

The show was revived on Broadway in 1987 with Lillias White as Effie. Jennifer Hudson won an Oscar for her performance as Effie in the 2006 film version of the musical.

AP

In this file undated photo originally provided by Paramount Pictures, Anika Noni Rose, Beyonce Knowles and Jennifer Hudson perform in the film "Dreamgirls."

Diddy to make short guest appearance on CSI: Miami

NEW YORK (AP)—Sean "Diddy" Combs is becoming a prosecutor—at least on television.

CBS says the rapper has agreed to a two-episode appearance on "CSI: Miami."

The network says Combs will portray a prosecutor who doesn't get along with police Lt. Horatio Caine, played by David Caruso.

CBS said Tuesday that Combs' episodes will probably air in mid- to late winter.

Combs drew praise for his role in the ABC movie "A Raisin in the Sun."

Another rap artist, Nelly, has had a recurring role this season in "CSI: New York."

AP

In this Feb. 24, 2008 file photo, Sean "Diddy" Combs poses on the press line at the Elton John Oscar Party in West Hollywood, Calif.

Marissa Jaret Winokur sets a return to 'Hairspray'

NEW YORK (AP)—First Harvey Fierstein. Now Marissa Jaret Winokur.

Winokur will return to "Hairspray" Dec. 9-Jan. 4 for the final four weeks of its Broadway run at the Neil Simon Theatre. She will join Fierstein, her original co-star, in the long-running musical that opened in August 2002. He came back to the show earlier this month.

Winokur won a Tony Award for her performance as Tracy Turnblad, the full-figure teen who yearns to dance on a TV show in 1960s Baltimore. She also recently appeared on the top-rated television reality series "Dancing With the Stars."

"Hairspray" is based on the cult movie by John Waters.

AP

In this May 6, 2008 file photo, actress Marissa Jaret Winokur poses on the press line at a party celebrating the 100th episode of Dancing with the Stars in Los Angeles.

Standing during pledge is simply a sign of respect

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: "Silent Supporter, Benson, N.C." (Aug. 26) cannot say the Pledge of Allegiance because of religious reasons. I support his or her right not to participate. However, I disagree with "Silent's" interpretation that standing is participating.

I work overseas in a U.S. Department of Defense school attended by students from 13 NATO countries. Every morning, the Pledge is recited and the non-American students stand respectfully. By standing, they are not pledging their own allegiance but behaving appropriately while those who choose to participate do so.

I do not believe that standing during the Pledge, or a similar pledge in any other country, implies consent or support. Standing quietly and allowing others to participate shows respect for the citizens, nation and our right to believe as we choose. Remaining seated is, in my opinion, disrespectful on many levels.

MAUREEN IN MONS, BELGIUM

DEAR MAUREEN: Your point is well-taken, and interestingly enough, many readers agree with you. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I think "Silent Supporter" may be confusing the Pledge of Allegiance with the singing of the National Anthem at sporting events. Standing is a sign of respect, not one of commitment. If sitting causes others to react unfavorably, simply show up a few minutes after kickoff or the first pitch. That way, no one will have any problems with you and your beliefs.

LET'S PLAY BALL IN AUSTIN, TEXAS

DEAR ABBY: I am a Quaker. We also find oaths, including the Pledge of Allegiance, contrary to our Quaker faith and practice. However, we still stand silently, considering it to be politeness, not participation.

TOM IN REDWOOD CITY, CALIF.

DEAR ABBY: On Flag Day, June 14, 1943, right in the middle of the greatest patriotic war in history, the U.S. Supreme Court passed a resolution, which is still in effect today, that no man, woman or child shall be required to stand for or salute the flag of this country, or to stand for the singing of the National Anthem. Anyone who berates another for not standing or participating in either is denying that person his legal rights as given by the U.S. Supreme Court. Therefore aliens, visitors, religious believers and dutiful citizens have the right to stand, salute and sing—or NOT.

NATIVE AMERICAN CITIZEN AND WWII VETERAN

DEAR ABBY: Remember the saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do"? A person who does not stand draws the attention and the ire of the crowd. Far better to arrive after the ceremony and avoid a scene.

QUIET BYSTANDER IN N.C.

DEAR ABBY: As an educator, I teach all of my students to stand for the Pledge, whether they participate or not. If they are entering a room or a stadium, they should stop walking and remain still as a sign of respect.

I am not a person unto myself but a part of a larger community. "Respect" should cross all boundaries that divide us. Whether one chooses to be respectful or not should not even be questioned. Having said that, however, those who taunted "Silent" should remember that respect goes both ways.

BEV IN STEILACOOM, WASH.

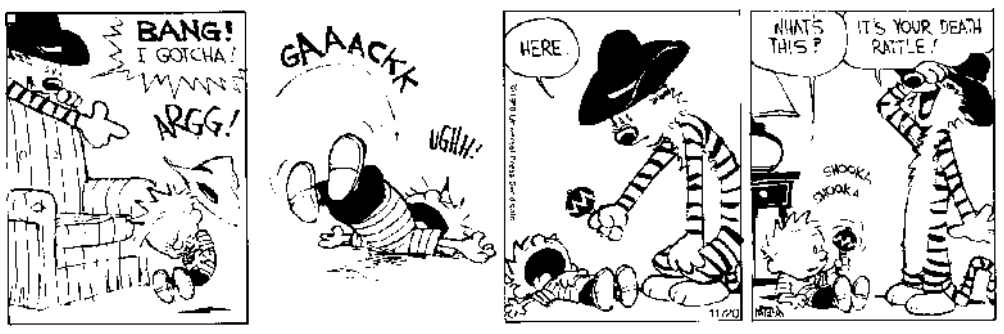
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

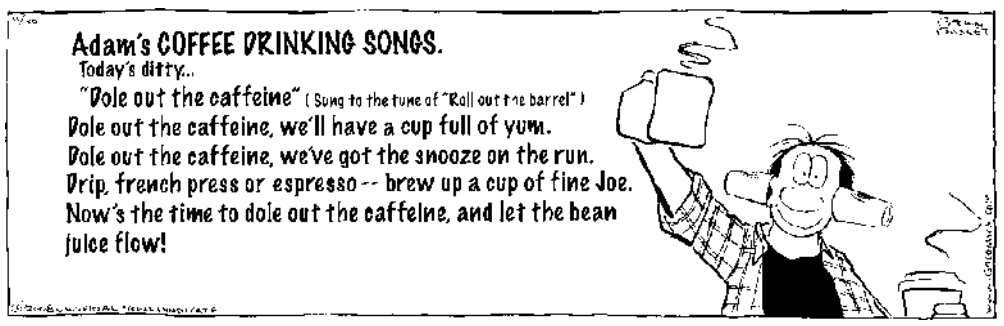


Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


Adam's COFFEE DRINKING SONGS.
Today's ditty..
"Dole out the caffeine" (Sung to the tune of "Roll out the barrel")
Dole out the caffeine, we'll have a cup full of yum.
Dole out the caffeine, we've got the snooze on the run.
Drip, french press or espresso -- brew up a cup of fine Joe.
Now's the time to dole out the caffeine, and let the bean juice flow!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

HELLO? IS THIS THE PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER FROM THE GYM?
Hi, THIS IS ENO. SORRY TO WAKE YOU, BUT I HAD A QUICK QUESTION.
HOW MANY SIT-UPS WILL I HAVE TO DO TOMORROW IF I DRINK FOUR BEERS?

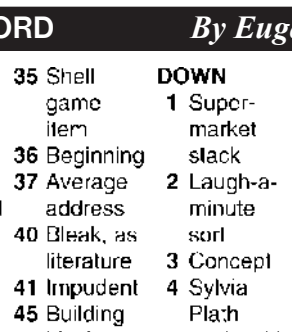
CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

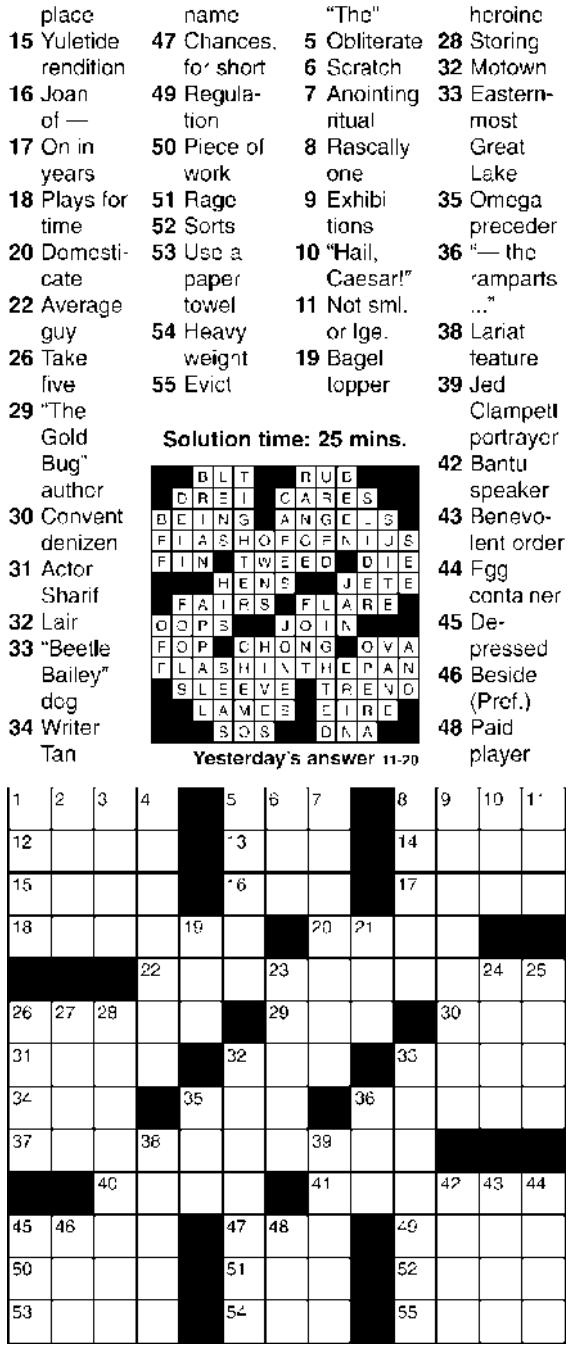
ACROSS
1 Baby bed
5 Ostrich's cousin
8 Unwanted e-mail
12 Staffer
13 Operated
14 Spelunkers' place
15 Yuletide rendition
16 Joan of —
17 On in years
18 Plays for time
20 Domesticate
22 Average guy
26 Take five
29 "The Gold Bug" author
30 Convent denizen
31 Actor Sharif
32 Lair
33 "Beetle Bailey" dog
34 Writer Tan
35 Shell game item
36 Beginning
37 Average address
40 Bleak, as literature
41 Impudent
45 Building block name
47 Chances, for short
49 Regulation
50 Piece of work
51 Rage
52 Sorts
53 Use a paper towel
54 Heavy weight
55 Evict

DOWN
1 Supermarket slack
2 Laugh-a-minute sort
3 Concept
4 Sylvia Plath work, with "The"
5 Obliterate
6 Scratch
7 Anointing ritual
8 Rascally one
9 Exhibitions
10 "Hail, Caesar!"
11 Not sml. or lge.
19 Bagel topper
21 Pink-slip
23 Lance
24 Just adorable
25 Entanglement
26 Leave your cell area
27 Jane Austen heroine
28 Storing
32 Motown
33 Easternmost Great Lake
35 Omega preceder
36 "— the ramparts ..."
38 Lariat feature
39 Jed Clampett portrayer
42 Bantu speaker
43 Benevolent order
44 Egg container
45 Depressed
46 Beside (Pref.)
48 Paid player

Solution time: 25 mins.



Yesterday's answer 11-20



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mischa Mandel, 25; Sean Young, 49; Bo Derek, 52; Veronica Hamel, 65

Happy Birthday: Letting things get to you will be your downfall. This year is about overcoming the odds and fighting back without getting angry. You can surpass your goals through sheer determination, preparation and know-how. There is plenty to gain if you are true to yourself. Change is present and can bring about a new outlook and attitude toward the future. Your numbers are 6, 8, 15, 21, 25, 35, 46

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You may not like what you have to do but, once you have put your responsibilities behind you, a refreshing turn of events will make you realize how fortunate you are. A change in your financial situation will develop through talks with an agency, institution or company. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You can have everyone eating out of your hand if you put your charm to work. Make arrangements that will please the people you want to impress. A relationship or partnership will open up into something you hoped for. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You have to put a stop to anyone trying to dump added responsibilities in your lap. Have a plan ready that will even out the duties. You will achieve greater equality within your current relationships. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You can stabilize your situation at home and at work. An opportunity through someone you know will result in a new pastime that could lead to more cash. Offering a service on the side will lead to doing something you enjoy. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Don't say too much to anyone if you want to stay out of trouble and not be blamed for meddling. An interesting offer may end up costing you when you should be saving. Think twice about what's being asked of you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Now is not the time to let your emotions take over, causing you to do or say something you may regret. Brute force will not get you ahead but patience and a good outlook will. Research a destination you'd like to visit and book your trip. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Spend time where it counts. Fix up your place and put things in order for the end of the year. Use your imagination and you will gain the approval of someone you respect. Lend a helping hand. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Someone at work may have a personal interest in you. Be careful not to let any connection you make jeopardize your position. There is money to be made if you put yourself on the line and promote what you have to offer. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't trust anyone to lead you in the right direction. You have to go it alone if you want things to fly. An unusual turn of events may leave you perplexed. Don't waste your time trying to figure out emotional matters. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Now is not the time to slow down when there is so much to accomplish. Success awaits you, so start the negotiations and don't stop until you get what you want. Put your money, skills and know-how on the line. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Run your ideas by people who will help you decipher the big picture. You'll have lots of choices but they won't be clear-cut. If you cannot determine the outcome, hold off until you can. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You'll be erratic, emotional and uncertain. Don't give in to demands if you aren't sure you want to go the distance. Love is looking good and can resolve a matter that you've been questioning. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are forceful, imaginative and sensitive. You are strong, outspoken and dedicated to following through with your plans.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			9		3			
	4	6			8	7	5	
	8						4	
1	3							9
5							8	1
	6						2	
	9	5	2			6	7	
			4		7			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	1	5	2	9	4	8	3	6
8	4	3	5	7	6	2	1	9
6	9	2	3	8	1	4	5	7
2	7	1	9	6	3	5	4	8
9	5	6	1	4	8	7	2	3
4	3	8	7	2	5	6	9	1
1	2	4	6	3	7	9	8	5
3	8	7	4	5	9	1	6	2
5	6	9	8	1	2	3	7	4

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SARBANES-OXLEY ACT — Solution: 7 letters

L	S	M	E	O	G	N	I	K	N	A	B	S	N	S
A	S	E	V	I	L	N	B	U	S	H	S	K	S	D
W	Y	T	I	L	I	B	I	S	N	O	P	S	E	R
S	D	T	T	T	I	T	E	N	B	D	P	I	I	A
A	E	Y	A	O	L	T	Y	S	G	O	U	R	T	O
R	T	C	T	C	S	A	R	C	N	I	O	A	I	B
B	E	O	N	C	S	O	N	S	I	S	S	N	R	B
O	C	T	E	A	T	D	O	E	E	L	S	M	U	F
X	T	N	S	S	N	R	R	C	P	P	O	S	C	O
A	I	E	E	I	S	I	I	A	E	C	I	P	E	V
C	O	V	R	O	E	T	F	C	D	N	R	L	S	E
T	N	E	P	N	C	N	T	L	E	N	R	I	E	R
I	A	R	E	A	O	I	R	S	E	X	A	T	M	S
O	M	P	R	T	O	O	S	O	Y	D	U	T	S	E
N	E	P	E	N	W	O	R	K	N	H	O	U	S	E

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Action, Assets, Banking, Boards, Boss, Bush, Business, Crime, Detection, Enron, Finances, Fraud, House, Inspector, Investors, Laws, Lives, Name, Note, Occasion, Oversight, Penalties, Pile, Policy, Practices, Prevent, Representative, Responsibility, Risks, Sarbox, Securities, Signing, Sponsors, Standards, Study, Taxes, Tyco, Work, Worldcom

Yesterday's Answer: Cook

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

CHAUFFEUR
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LOST PASSPORT
Name: Guo, Yu Di
Passport No: G04199035
Type of Passport: China
Date of Birth: Nov 13, 1976
If found, please call
789-2911 - Li Guo Kin.

Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission

P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, M.P. 96950

Position: Executive Director

How To Apply:
Interested applicants should send a letter of interest along with a resumé to:

Viola Alepuyo, Chairperson
Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission
Caller Box 1000, Saipan, M.P. 96952

Letters of interest and resumes must be received no later than **Monday, November 24th.** If you have any questions concerning this position, please contact Ms. Alepuyo at (670) 233-8535/6.

WHO MAY APPLY:
The CPUC will consider all applications meeting the minimum qualifications and interview the most qualified candidates.

Description:

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:
Under the direction of the Commissioners, the Executive Director performs a variety of administrative duties, requiring independent action and initiative, personally handling a variety of sensitive Commission issues. Duties must be performed at the highest degree of competence.

The Executive Director oversees the overall operation of the Commission's office. The Executive Director is expected to have general knowledge of CPUC's enabling act and is expected to track legislative decisions affecting CPUC to ensure that members of the Public Utilities Commission shall be integrally and directly involved in, and accountable for, the commission's decisions.

The Executive Director collects, reviews and organizes all material required for the Commission to properly preside at meetings and hearings and coordinates with other agencies, utility companies, reporters and staff in arranging meetings and hearings. The Executive Director also independently researches, organizes and provides background information on sensitive correspondence issues requiring the personal attention of the Commission.

The Executive Director oversees the effective and efficient office operations and maintains Commission records pursuant to public policy. The Executive Director assists in preparing and maintaining the Commission's annual budget, track office expenses, prepares travel arrangement and justification pursuant to CNMI public law. The Executive Director is expected to assist in the preparation of other reports as required by CNMI law and regulation and other duties and responsibilities as assigned.

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATIONS:
Applicants must be able to communicate effectively, work independently, be able to organize and prioritize assignments, work under pressure, execute sound judgment and exercise a high degree of confidentiality, independence and initiative in performing a variety of tasks. In addition, applicant must display discretion, tact, poise and be diplomatic in dealing with a wide variety of people as well as a wide range of inquiries.

Requirements:

- High School Diploma and previous work experience in an administrative capacity with a minimum of 5 years of related experience;
- Candidate must demonstrate ability to produce high-quality work products with attention to detail;
- Candidate must be highly proficient with desktop application such as Word, Excel and Power Point;
- Excellent English, composition, spelling and grammar;
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written, which demonstrate a professional approach in representing CPUC

Preferred:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business or related field and previous work experience as an administrator with 3 years of related experience;
- General knowledge of administrative practices and principles;
- Office Management skills

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Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Red Sox Pedroia easily wins AL MVP award

NEW YORK (AP)—Dustin Pedroia could easily be mistaken for a mechanic, carpenter or plumber, most anything except a major leaguer. "I'm not the biggest guy in the world. I don't have that many tools," he said. "If you saw me walking down the street, you wouldn't think I'm a baseball player." Well, not unless he was carrying his AL MVP award.

Pedroia added to his ever-expanding trophy case Tuesday, becoming the first second baseman to earn the honor in nearly a half-century.

The Boston little man with the meaty swing easily beat out Minnesota slugger Justin Morneau, Red Sox teammate Kevin Youkilis and record-setting closer Francisco Rodriguez in a scattered ballot that saw five different players draw first place-votes.

Generously listed at 5-foot-9, Pedroia has quickly piled up a huge stack of hardware. Earlier this month, he won the Gold Glove. He was the 2007 AL Rookie of the Year and capped off that season with a World Series ring.

"I had to overcome a lot of things to prove people wrong, and so far I've done that," he said on a conference call from his home in Arizona. "I have to find a way to have that edge."

Pedroia drew 16 of the 28 first-place votes cast by members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America and finished with 317 points. He was even left off one ballot, while Morneau and Youkilis were listed on every one.

AP

Boston Red Sox's Dustin Pedroia smiles as he holds a news conference after being named the American League Most Valuable Player Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008 in Tempe, Ariz.

"You look around the league, there are a ton of great players," Pedroia said.

Pedroia led the AL in hits, runs and doubles in helping the Red Sox win the wild-card berth. He batted .326 with 17 home runs and 83 RBIs and also stole 20 bases.

Pedroia became a fan favorite at Fenway Park with his scrappy approach. In a lineup depleted by injuries to David Ortiz, Mike Lowell and J.D. Drew and the midseason trade of Manny Ramirez, Pedroia took his hearty hacks wherever needed—while he usually batted second, he also hit leadoff and cleanup.

Nellie Fox was the previous second baseman to become AL MVP, in 1959 with the White Sox. No position has produced fewer MVPs overall—just 10 overall since the AL and NL awards were first presented in 1931.

Pedroia was the fourth second baseman to win the AL MVP award, along with Fox, Joe Gordon (1942) and Charlie Gehringer (1937). Six second basemen have won the NL honor, with Jeff Kent, Ryne Sandberg and Joe Morgan doing it most recently.

Pedroia and his wife originally planned to leave early this week for a vacation in Mexico. But with the MVP vote looming, a Red Sox official suggested he delay the trip by a day or two, just in case.

"I really didn't know what to expect," Pedroia said. "I wasn't nervous or overly excited."

Pedroia certainly didn't plan on this. He made just $457,000 last season and didn't have an MVP bonus provision in his contract.

Pedroia was driving to his daily workout when he got the phone call telling him he'd won. Right away, the calls and text messages from teammates began pouring in.

"It's unbelievable," he said.

Pedroia became the 10th Red Sox player to take the award and first since Mo Vaughn in 1995. He also is just the third player to become MVP the season after earning the Rookie of the Year award, joining Cal Ripken Jr. and Ryan Howard.

Morneau got seven first-place votes and had 257 points, and Youkilis and Twins catcher Joe Mauer each got a pair of first-place votes. Rodriguez drew the other first-place nod and came in sixth.

Morneau, the 2006 AL MVP winner, hit .300 with 23 home runs and 129 RBIs in helping the Twins reach a one-game playoff for the AL Central, which they lost to Chicago.

Youkilis (.312, 29, 115) was third with 201 points and Mauer (.328, 9, 85) was next with 188 points.

White Sox star Carlos Quentin, who was leading the AL with 36 home runs when he broke his right wrist in an act of frustration, was fifth with 160 points. Rodriguez, who went 62-for-69 in save chances and recently filed for free agency, drew 143 points.

Texas slugger Josh Hamilton, who made a remarkable recovery from drug addiction to resume his career, was seventh and followed by last year's winner, Yankees star Alex Rodriguez.

Tampa Bay first baseman Carlos Pena came in ninth, the top vote-getter from the AL champions. The Rays beat Boston in Game 7 of the ALCS.

Morneau earned $75,000 for his MVP finish and Mauer, Youkilis and Pena got $25,000 each.

The AL MVP was the last of the major BBWAA awards presented this year. Albert Pujols won the NL MVP award Monday and last week Cliff Lee and Tim Lincecum won Cy Youngs, Joe Maddon and Lou Piniella were picked as Managers of the Year and Evan Longoria and Geovanny Soto were the top rookies.

Source: Wakamatsu is new Mariners manager

SEATTLE (AP)—Don Wakamatsu has his first job as a major league manager, and it's not exactly an easy one.

Looking for new direction, the sunken Seattle Mariners picked Wakamatsu over several other inexperienced candidates in the hope that Oakland's bench coach can help them rebound from a 100-loss season.

Wakamatsu was chosen as Mariners manager Tuesday, a person familiar with the decision told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because no announcement had been made.

Mariners spokesman Tim Hevly said the team expected to make an announcement Wednesday, but he would not confirm or deny the choice of Wakamatsu.

KING television in Seattle first reported that Wakamatsu got the job.

By filling the only opening in the majors with a rookie manager, Seattle scoffed at the conventional idea that rebuilding teams need experience at the helm. The Mariners have never reached the World Series, and their most recent playoff appearance came in 2001.

The 45-year-old Wakamatsu spent four seasons managing in the minors, never higher than Double-A.

"This is a heck of an opportunity," he said last week after he interviewed in Seattle.

None of the Mariners' seven candidates had managed in the majors, underscoring how intent first-year general manager Jack Zduriencik is on completely remaking this flopping franchise. Seattle lost 101 games this season, its most since 1983, and became the first team to lose 100 with a $100 million payroll.

Zduriencik didn't even interview a former major league manager, saying he's been around enough of them in his 25 years primarily as a scout to know what one would say.

Wakamatsu beat out a fresh, relatively unknown field: Boston bench coach Brad Mills and third base coach DeMarlo Hale; Arizona third base coach Chip Hale; Chicago White Sox bench coach and former Mariners infielder Joey Cora; St. Louis third base coach Jose Oquendo and San Diego Triple-A manager Randy Ready.

Wakamatsu becomes Seattle's fifth manager since Lou Piniella left following the 2002 season. He replaces Jim Riggleman, who took over in June when John McLaren was fired after a 25-47 start to a season in which the Mariners were expected to contend for the playoffs.

McLaren was on the job less than 12 months, after Mike Hargrove quit suddenly in the middle of the 2007 season - the last time Seattle was winning.

Zduriencik is rebuilding the Mariners with a new scouting department, a new system of player evaluation - and now a new field leader who knows the AL West.

Wakamatsu interviewed with the then-veteran Rangers a few years ago. He was their bench coach from 2003-06 and third base coach in 2007. Then he went to the young, rebuilding Athletics to assist manager and friend Bob Geren—the two used to coach their sons' Little League teams together.

Wakamatsu said recently he thought opposite approaches in those last two jobs would serve him well in Seattle, which is transforming itself from old and bad to young and hopefully better.

The native of Hood River, Ore., who grew up in Hayward, Calif., says he knows only a little Japanese - always a consideration in Seattle, with All-Star Ichiro Suzuki as the franchise cornerstone - though it has improved recently while with the A's and Rangers. Wakamatsu was the minor league catching coordinator for the Angels from 2001-02, after playing in the minors as a catcher from 1985-96. He played 18 games in the majors with the White Sox in 1991.

He managed Arizona's rookie league team in 1997, then at Class-A High Desert, Double-A El Paso and Double-A Erie from 1998-2000.

He said last week he was edgy talking to Zduriencik and trying to learn if the team is going to have a long-term rebuilding project or push immediately to win in 2009.

"Anybody can come in and say, 'I want to win right away.' But you have to be realistic," Wakamatsu said last week. "There's work to be done this winter."

Zduriencik's intent is to win as soon as possible and he refuses to declare next season a lost makeover. Wakamatsu said winning now is possible, even though 36-year-old Raul Ibanez, the team's leading run producer, is a free agent, and the underperforming, expensive rotation includes Erik Bedard, Jarrod Washburn and Carlos Silva.

"From the outside looking in, this is a club that a lot of smart people around the world thought would make the postseason," Wakamatsu said. "Why were they wrong? ... What changed? I don't see this team as being an old team.

"In general, it's a young team that maybe with some prodding we can win right away."

Dempster and Cubs agree to $52 million, 4-year deal

CHICAGO (AP)—Pitcher Ryan Dempster and the Chicago Cubs agreed Tuesday on a $52 million, four-year contract that includes a player option for 2012.

He gets a $4 million signing bonus, $8 million next year, $12.5 million in 2010 and $13.5 million in 2011. Dempster has a 2012 option for $14 million.

Dempster was 17-6 with a 2.96 ERA for the Cubs last season, then became a free agent after making the switch from the closer to starter.

"It was imperative that we kept him in house," Cubs general manager Jim Hendry. "No doubt in our minds that Ryan would have exceeded this deal on the streets in three or four weeks from now, the way the market is for starting pitching. Ryan was committed. From Day One he told us he wanted to stay. And it was a priority for us to try and get it done before we got too far down the road in the winter."

As the Cubs' closer from 2005-07, he saved 87 games in 102 chances. But after earning a spot in the rotation during spring training, Dempster returned to the starter's role he held with the Marlins and Reds from 1998-2003.

Dempster was 14-3 at Wrigley Field during the regular season after starting 10-0 on the Cubs' home field.

"When we were going to give him a chance to make the rotation, there wasn't any doubt in his mind, not only was he going to make it, but win at a high level," Hendry said.

"He's still got five or six good years in him," Hendry added. "You win a lot of baseball games with this guy on your ballclub."

Dempster struggled in the playoff opener against the Dodgers, throwing 109 pitches in 4 2-3 innings, giving up four runs and four hits while matching a career high with seven walks. He gave up a grand slam to James Loney in the Cubs' 7-2 loss.

Chicago—which had the NL's best record—was swept out of the playoffs in the first round for the second straight season.

On the first day of spring training last February, it was Dempster who said he thought the Cubs would win the World Series. But instead, they still haven't won one since 1908. Now he'll get another chance to help the Cubs end their long drought.

Last week, the Cubs traded for Florida reliever Kevin Gregg and said goodbye to free agent Kerry Wood. Hendry said the Cubs couldn't give him the long-term deal he deserved because they had more important priorities.

And one of those top priorities was re-signing Dempster. Chicago also has explored acquiring San Diego ace Jake Peavy.

"I wouldn't necessarily rule out anything," Hendry said without being specific. He said the Cubs would not hesitate to bring on more pitching if the situation was right, while still hoping to add a left-handed bat.

Hendry, who got a contract extension through 2012 in October, said he expected the team's payroll to increase slightly this season. He said he'd encountered no financial restrictions, even with the team up for sale by Tribune Co.

Gasol scores 34 to lead Lakers past Bulls

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Losing a game didn't sit well with the Los Angeles Lakers. They took out their anger on the Chicago Bulls.

Pau Gasol scored 24 of his season-high 34 points in the first half, and the Lakers rebounded from their first setback of the season with a 116-109 victory over the Bulls on Tuesday night. His previous season high was 22 points.

Kobe Bryant added 21 points, five rebounds and six assists and Andrew Bynum had 18 points and nine rebounds for the Lakers (8-1), who had three full days to contemplate a 106-95 loss to the Detroit Pistons.

Jordan Farmar scored 12 points and Lamar Odom had 10 points, eight rebounds and five assists before fouling out with 8:30 remaining.

Derrick Rose led Chicago (5-6) with 25 points and nine assists. Ben Gordon added 23 points and Aaron Gray had 11 for the Bulls, who are winless in four road games.

With Bryant on the bench, Chicago rallied from an 18-point deficit early in the fourth quarter to draw within 10 on a twisting layup by Rose with 4:08 remaining. But that's as close as the Bulls would get until the outcome had been decided.

Bryant made his first appearance of the final period with 3:50 remaining and made a 3-pointer on the Lakers' first possession, helping to keep them safely in front.

Bryant scored seven points during a 12-2 run to start the second half, giving the Lakers a 73-58 lead. Chicago drew within eight points before Bynum scored six in a row and Bryant added a 3-pointer, making it 82-65. It was 90-74 entering the final period.

Bryant was held scoreless until hitting a jumper with 8:18 left in the second quarter, triggering a 21-4 run that gave the Lakers a 57-40 lead, and they were on top the rest of the way. Bryant scored eight points and Gasol six during the spurt.

The Bulls responded by outscoring the Lakers 16-4 during the remainder of the second quarter, making it 61-56 at halftime.

Gasol shot 7-of-9 while scoring 18 points in the first quarter, which ended with Los Angeles on top 30-29.

Mavericks 100, Bobcats 83

At Charlotte, Dirk Nowitzki scored 32 points as the Dallas Mavericks beat the Charlotte Bobcats, delighting owner Mark Cuban a day after he was charged with insider trading.

With Cuban sitting along the baseline and as animated as usual, the Mavericks toyed with the lifeless, undermanned Bobcats. Josh Howard added 21.

A career-high 21 points from rookie D.J. Augustin was nowhere near enough for Charlotte, which fell behind 15-0 while playing again without injured top scorer Jason Richardson. The Bobcats didn't score until nearly 7 minutes had elapsed in a woeful performance that kept them winless all-time against Dallas.

Cavaliers 106, Nets 82

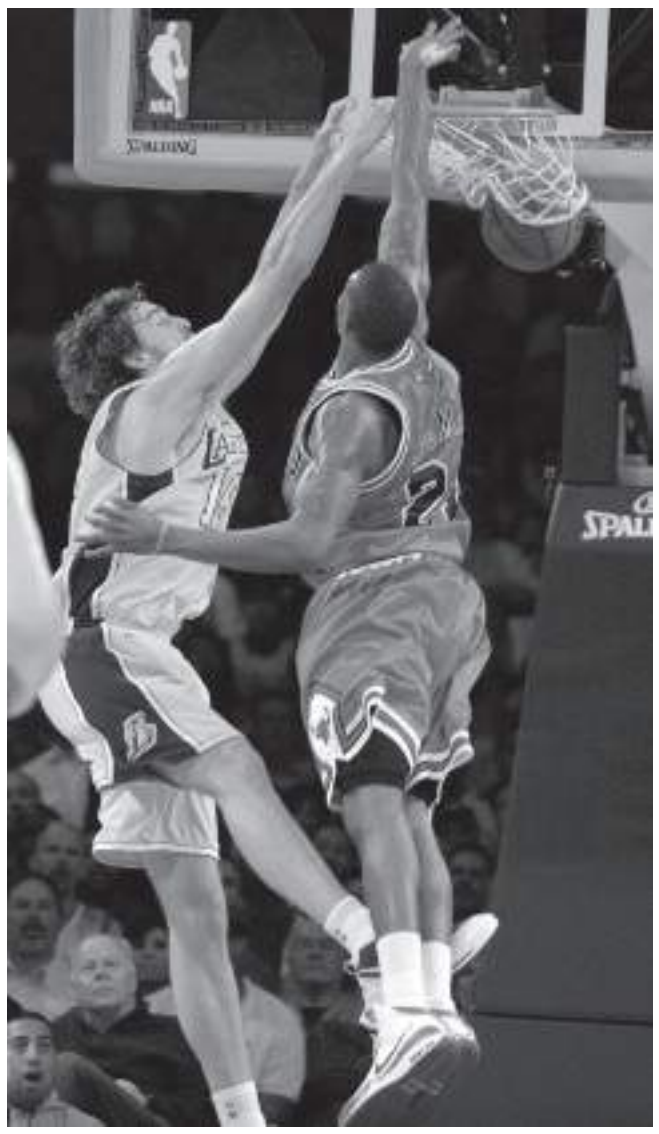
At East Rutherford, New Jersey, LeBron James scored 31 points in showing the New York metropolitan area what might be on the free agency market in 2010, and Cleveland rolled to its eighth straight win with a decision over New Jersey.

James added eight rebounds, four assists and a remarkable blocked shot on a play late in the third quarter when he chased down Nets point guard Devin Harris on a fastbreak and prevented a dunk.

Harris, who was looking for his fourth straight 30-point game, had 23 points to lead New Jersey.

Heat 94, Wizards 87

At Washington, Dwyane Wade had 19 points, 10 assists and six rebounds, and Miami caught a couple of breaks in the final minutes to beat struggling Washington.



AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward Pau Gasol, left, dunks over Chicago Bulls forward Tyrus Thomas during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008.

Wade, who played despite rolling his ankle in a loss at Toronto on Sunday, led six players in double figures as the Heat beat the Wizards for the second time in five days and celebrated a rare road victory. Miami entered the game 4-1 at home and 1-4 on the road.

The Wizards sank to 1-7, the franchise's worst start since 1999.

Magic 103, Raptors 90

At Orlando, Florida, Jameer Nelson scored a season-high 22 points to lead Orlando to a win over Toronto, overcoming a season-high 40-point effort by Chris Bosh.

Bosh also had 18 rebounds, but the Raptors had 24 turnovers.

Rashard Lewis and Hedo Turkoglu each added 22 points for the Magic.

Orlando built a 13-point third quarter before hanging on for its eighth win in nine games.

Pacers 113, Hawks 96

At Indianapolis, Danny Granger scored 34 points to lead Indiana past slumping Atlanta.

Rasho Nesterovic scored 21 points and Troy Murphy added 10 points and 19 rebounds for the Pacers.

Joe Johnson finished with 25 points for the Hawks who, after a 6-0 start, have lost four straight.

Celtics 110, Knicks 101

At Boston, Brian Scalabrine, in the starting lineup while Kevin Garnett served a one-game suspension, hit a 3-pointer with 1:14 left to help Boston recover after its 15-point, fourth-quarter lead was trimmed to four, as the Celtics beat New York.

Paul Pierce scored 22, Kendrick Perkins had 16 points and eight rebounds and Rajon Rondo had 15 points, eight boards and seven assists for the Celtics, who were playing without Garnett for the first time this season.

Wilson Chandler scored 23, and Zach Randolph had 18 points and eight rebounds for the Knicks.

Grizzlies 109, Kings 94

At Memphis, Tennessee, Rudy Gay scored 22 points and Memphis shot a season-high 54 percent to help the Grizzlies snap a four-game losing streak with a victory over the Kings.

Hakim Warrick added 21 points and 10 rebounds and Marc Gasol scored 16.

Memphis shot above 60 percent for the better part of the game, and built its double-digit lead in the second quarter. The Kings never threatened after halftime, dropping their fourth game out of the last five. Memphis also dominated the boards, outrebounding Sacramento 46-33.

John Salmons led the Kings with 18 points, while Spencer Hawes scored 14, hitting all seven of his shots.

Nuggets 114, Bucks 105

At Denver, Linas Kleiza scored 25 points and Carmelo Anthony had 17 as the Nuggets beat Milwaukee.

The Nuggets got double-digit scoring from all their starters, plus Kleiza and Renaldo Balkman, and they beat their season high in total points.

The Bucks, who got 25 points from Charlie Bell, played their eighth straight game without star Michael Redd (ankle).

Warriors 111, Trail Blazers 106

At Oakland, Stephen Jackson scored 10 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter and the Warriors overcame Greg Oden's 22 points and 10 rebounds in a victory over the Trail Blazers.

Armstrong fears for his safety at Tour de France

LONDON (AP)—Lance Armstrong fears he could be attacked by spectators if he returns to the Tour de France next year.

The seven-time Tour champion, who is making a comeback after three years in retirement, said in an interview in The Guardian on Tuesday that he is concerned about his safety.

"I don't want to enter an unsafe situation but you see this stuff coming out of France," said the American rider, who has many critics in France. "There're some aggressive, angry emotions. If you believe what you read, my personal safety could be in jeopardy.

"Cycling is a sport of the open road and spectators are lining the road. I try to believe that people, even if they don't like me, will let the race unfold."

Armstrong was asked if he specifically fears a physical attack.

"Yeah. There're directors of French teams that have encouraged people to take to the streets ... elbow to elbow. It's very emotional and tense," he said.

It's unclear why Armstrong is worried about his safety now, given that attacks on riders are extremely rare. Organizers have in recent years taken additional steps to protect riders from spectators, including increased use of crowd barriers.

The Tour has its own police force to guard the route and ensure safety, and French police paid particular attention to Armstrong's safety when he was riding.

Armstrong announced his comeback in September and joined the Astana team. He is reunited with Astana team leader Johanna Bruyneel, who teamed with Armstrong for all seven Tour de France wins from 1999-2005.

Armstrong plans to meet with Tour officials before deciding whether to compete in the 2009 Tour.

Previously, he had expressed doubts over trying for win another Tour title because of the problems he might encounter with French organizers, journalists and fans.

Armstrong is scheduled to race the Giro d'Italia for the first time. The 100th anniversary edition of the Giro is scheduled for May 9-31. The Tour de France starts July 4.

The 37-year-old Armstrong said in the Guardian interview that he is in better shape at this stage of the season than in past years.

"I'm much better physically now," he said at his home in Austin, Texas. "And mentally there is no comparison. I'm far stronger and more motivated. The motivation of 2008 feels like the motivation of 1999. I was back from cancer then. I had the motivation of vengeance because nobody wanted me or believed in me."

Armstrong reiterated his denials of the doping allegations that have dogged him during his career.

Pacman hopeful of returning soon to Cowboys

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP)—Suspended Cowboys cornerback Adam "Pacman" Jones has completed the inpatient portion of his NFL-ordered alcohol treatment and has returned to Texas, where he is hopeful of soon being able to rejoin the team.

Jones' attorney, Worrick Robinson, said the player is handing personal matters while waiting for commissioner Roger Goodell to determine if Jones will be reinstated and be able to play again this season or in the future.

"He's using this time to focus on himself and focus on his priorities, which is to stay committed to the program he started," Robinson told the AP late Tuesday night. "He's re-establishing his life in Dallas with this program being a priority."

Jones was suspended indefinitely last month for violating the league's personal conduct policy. The commissioner said then that the suspension would be a minimum of four games and that he would evaluate the situation after that time.

The fourth game was Sunday, and Jones took part in a program in the Boston area during the month while he wasn't playing.

Robinson said there has "not been any timetable for when a decision will be made by the commissioner."

Only six weeks after being reinstated from a 17-month suspension because of repeated legal problems, the cornerback was involved in an alcohol-related scuffle Oct. 7 with one of his bodyguards at a private party at an upscale Dallas hotel. The Cowboys had employed the bodyguards to try to keep Jones out of trouble.

The league said then that reinstatement would depend on strict compliance with treatment plans and an evaluation by "clinical experts."

In an interview Tuesday on the NFL Network, Goodell said he would be hearing later this week from professionals who have been evaluating Jones over the past month.

The commissioner said a decision with respect to Jones' status would be made "some time in the coming days."

Robinson said Jones will be establishing an outpatient relationship in Dallas as he continues with his program.

"He is staying true to his program, but he is also a 25-year-old young man who is a professional football player and he would like to return to his family, which is the Cowboys," Robinson said. "He and I have had several discussions that the only thing he can control is what he's doing and how he's addressing his personal issues, and the rest of that is out of his control."

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said last week that he would welcome Adam Jones back to the team if he's reinstated and didn't expect it to be a distraction if the player returned.

"No, not if he's adhering to the kind of things that he has to address," the owner said. "He was a hard worker, hard practicer and certainly contributed positively to our team. So I don't consider him a distraction."

Finance ends slump in softball league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Finance returned to its winning ways after thumping the Commonwealth Health Center, 17-12, in the women's division of the Budweiser 2008 Inter-Government/Business Softball League Monday night at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

Finance won its debut but dropped its next two games before recovering against CHC, seizing control of the game after scoring five runs apiece in the third and fourth inning.

A two-run homer from centerfielder Liz Lebria at the bottom of the first gave Finance a good start leading at 6-1.

But Finance committed several errors in the second inning allowing CHC to score seven runs and grab the driver's seat, 8-6, as the latter shut out the former at the bottom of the second.

But that was the last time CHC hung on to the lead, as Finance cashed in on a five-run bottom of the third and fifth and gave up only four runs in the last five innings.

Leftfielder Lilian Pangelinan was perfect at-bat for Finance, going 3-for-3. She scored three runs and had two triples and four RBIs.

Lebria and Pauline Tudela both went 3-for-4 at the plate with the former making two runs and four RBIs. Tudela scored two runs, one triple, and one RBIs.

Overall, Finance had a decent job at-bat going 22-for-42 for a batting average of .524.

Benny Seman was 2-for-2 for CHC, while centerfielder Evita Punimata went 3-for-4.

As a team, CHC had a batting average of .350 after hitting 14-for-40.

CHC absorbed its second loss in three games.

MEN'S
No Zone 11, CHC 6

CHC had a double black eye when its men's team bowed to No Zone.

No Zone shut out CHC in the last two innings to eke out an 11-6 victory which improved the former's record to 2-2. CHC dropped to a 1-3 slate.

The game was tied, 6-all, after six complete innngs.

Outfielder Ed Diaz made it 7-6 after reaching home plate on a Ned Norita base-on-ball.

At the bottom of the sixth, the farthest that CHC could reach was third base, as Joe Tenorio's attempt to bring Vince Rabauliman home was foiled by Frank Pangelinan, who caught Tenorio's fly ball for the third out. Tom Diaz flied out to right field for the first out, while pitcher Eric David struck out Rick Kaipat for the second out.

At the top of the seventh, extra hitter John Santos blasted a two-run single and Kent Kalen and Santos himself had one run apiece to give No Zone an 11-6 lead.

CHC's first three batters flied out ending the team's chances to extend the game.

Kalen went 3-for-4 at-bat for No Zone highlighting his impressive game with a two-run homer in the third inning.

POI 12,
Mayor's Office 2

In the other men's division game, POI cruised to its second straight win after whipping Mayor's Office, 12-2.

POI allowed the Mayor's Office to score only in the first inning to nail an easy victory.

Leftfielder Ben Tenorio scored the first for Mayor's Office at the bottom of the first on a Donald Manalo triple. Manalo later reached home plate on a Manny Tenorio single to five their team a 2-0 lead.

POI's first three batters at the top of the first were thrown out, but Mayor's Office's successive errors in the second allowed POI to score and tie the game at 2-2, after two complete innings.

POI added six more runs in the third, while the Mayor's Office spend the rest of the night wondering what hit them in the last five innings, as the latter failed to score.

Pitcher Maurice Omengkar allowed only four hits in the last five innings and POI outfielders hustled for several fly balls frustrating Mayor's Office sluggers.

The Mayor's Office had a dismal performance going only 7-for-24 at the plate for a batting average of .292. POI was 17-for-34 at-bat for a decent .500 batting average.

Catcher Ton Luzama went 3-for-3 for POI, scoring three runs, one double, one triple, and two RBIs.

The Mayor's Office remained winless in four games putting them at the bottom of the standings in the 20-team field.

SLLB meeting Saturday

Saipan Little League Baseball incoming president Mike Borja is calling on all coaches and managers of teams participating in the 2009 season of the SLLB to attend a meeting this Saturday at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The meeting is set for 10am with SLLB officials and representatives of each team expected to discuss preparations for next yearís SLLB competitions.

The 2008 season of SLLB will start early to accommodate additional teams and to give Saipan Little Leaguers more time to prepare for the district and regional tournaments.

Instead of the usual opening in February, SLLB is eyeing to kick off the 2009 season on Jan. 10.

Next year's SLLB is expected to draw more than 30 teams.

The SaipanCell Patriots are the defending champions in the centerpiece Majors and will aim for their fourth title in a row. Three other teams will attempt to defend their titles, namely the Kagman Lion Hearts (Junior League), Jets (Senior League), and Tanapag Falcons (Big League).

Borja said if they start the league on January as set, they are hoping to end the season mid-May and proceed with the CNMI District Tournament, which Saipan will be hosting in June.

After the district meet, which will feature the All-Star teams from Saipan, Tinian, and hopefully Rota, the CNMI bets will go to Hong Kong for the Junior, Senior, and Big League divisions of the 2009 Asia Pacific Regional Tournament late June. Indonesia will host the Majors qualifier.

Teams that will win in the regional meet will compete in the World Series.

Last year, Saipan swept the district meet, but only the Big League All-Stars competed in the World Series in Easley, South Carolina and came home winless in the tournament.

For more information on SLLB, contact Borja at 322-0340 or 285-1980. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

BADMINTON

From Page 28

pires skills will also be tested this weekend after they went through similar clinics with Mordaunt.

The Traders Insurance-sponsored tournament will run from Nov. 22 to Dec. 14 with games to be played every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Each team will have one A-level player, three B-level players (men's), two B-level players (women's), and two C-level players (one each in the men's and women's division).

The tournament will have competitions in the mixed double, men's singles, and men's and women's doubles.

The eight teams that will battle for the championship are the Net Fighters, the Badminton All-Stars, D'Blue Powers, Bad Masters, Red Dragon Shuttlers, Gray Hawks, Smash Killers, and Team Yellow.

Meanwhile, Traders Insurance handed over a $2,000 donation for the NMBF tournament.

Aguda received the check from Traders Insurance general manager Ernesto Licop during the brief press conference at Trader's office in Beach Road, San Jose Village yesterday.

Joining Aguda in the ceremony were several NMBF officials.

"We thank Traders Insurance for their continuing support to badminton. Their donation is very much appreciated especially at this time when most of the businesses are experiencing financial problems," Aguda said.

"Traders Insurance is committed to help any organization which promotes physical fitness, camaraderie, and sportsmanship. We are looking forward to a successful tournament. To the participants, have fun and do your best to win," Licop said.

NINE

From Page 28

31 bronze medals for a total of 99 medals.

Guam, meanwhile, had the most gold in the Saipan Micro Games with 51 and finished with the second most total medals with 96, while Palau finished in third in the gold medal race with 27, while hauling a total of 64 medals.

The Micronesian Games began in 1969 as the Micronesian Olympics on Saipan. It made a return in 1990 on Saipan again before moving to Guam in 1994 and to Palau in 1998. Pohnpei hosted the 2002 Games. The CNMI hosted the 2006 edition of the Games only following the withdrawal of Chuuk.

MARIANAS

From Page 28

draw record for nine points.

Grabbing the No. 1 spot from Aon was Marianas Medical which has earned 10 points with the latter's 5-1 record. Prior to its victory over Aon, Marianas Medical slipped past Matthew Smith's Law Office, 2-1.

In other results last weekend, MTI bounced back from its loss to AON via a 2-1 triumph over Wild Bill's.

Marine Tech nailed its second win in six games and now has four points. But it remained in fifth place in the team standings behind Hardt Eye, which is still winless in five matches.

Hardt Eye was to meet Matthew Smith's Law Office in the third game Saturday, but results of the match were unavailable at press time.

Hardt Eye's attempt to enter the win column two weeks ago was foiled by Wild Bill's, which pulled off a 2-1 victory.

Wild Bill's is currently in third place in the team standings with its six points winning three of its six matches.

Games in the futsal league are played every Saturday, from 8:30am to 11:30am. The league has a round-robin format in the regular season, while the format in the playoffs has yet to be decided.

This is the first women's futsal league in the CNMI. Futsal is an indoor football game with teams having five players each on the court. It demands quick reflexes, fast thinking, and accurate ball control. Games are played in a basketball-style court, with no walls and a low-bouncing ball, requiring players to use their skill rather than the ball's bounce to propel it.

JR. TENNIS

From Page 28

the level of competition is very high, as players in this higher age group have matured enough after playing in various tournaments," Race said. "There is also a big difference in the physical development of players in the 14-and-under and 18-and-under age groups.

"So when we were in Fiji, there were discussions on going back to the old age group competition to sort of bring back to balance of competition. Most of the members agreed and we put the agreement in writing and brought it up to OTF," Race added.

Race said more than a week before NMITA started the Fall Classic, he received information from OTF saying the federation decided to revert to the old age group.

"It's good news for us and for most of the OTF member-islands. For us, Rafael (Jones) can still play in the 14-and-under age-group competition in the North Pacific Qualifying tournament next year and in the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Fiji," said Race, who added Thea Minor is expected to stay in the girls' 14-and-under age group competition for two more years.

Minor is only 12 years old, while Jones just turned 14 two months ago.

"We also have a lot of good players in the 10-and-under division who can stay in that age group and continue to improve their skills before moving up to a higher age group. It's a win-win situation for us," Race said.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	10	2	.833	–
New York	6	5	.545	3 1/2
Philadelphia	5	5	.500	4
Toronto	5	5	.500	4
New Jersey	4	6	.400	5

Southeast Division

Orlando	8	3	.727	–
Atlanta	6	4	.600	1 1/2
Miami	6	5	.545	2
Charlotte	3	7	.300	4 1/2
Washington	1	7	.125	5 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	9	2	.818	–
Detroit	7	3	.700	1 1/2
Indiana	5	5	.500	3 1/2
Chicago	5	6	.455	4
Milwaukee	5	7	.417	4 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Houston	7	4	.636	_
New Orleans	5	4	.556	1
San Antonio	5	5	.500	1 1/2
Dallas	4	7	.364	3
Memphis	4	7	.364	3

Northwest Division

Denver	7	4	.636	_
Utah	7	4	.636	_
Portland	6	5	.545	1
Minnesota	1	8	.111	5
Oklahoma City	1	10	.091	6

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	8	1	.889	_
Phoenix	8	4	.667	1 1/2
Golden State	5	6	.455	4
Sacramento	4	8	.333	5 1/2
L.A. Clippers	1	9	.100	7 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Orlando 103, Toronto 90
Indiana 113, Atlanta 96
Miami 94, Washington 87
Dallas 100, Charlotte 83
Boston 110, New York 101
Cleveland 106, New Jersey 82
Memphis 109, Sacramento 94
Denver 114, Milwaukee 105
L.A. Lakers 116, Chicago 109
Golden State 111, Portland 106

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

NMIFA STANDINGS (Futsal)

	W	L	Draw	Points
MMC	5	1	0	10
Aon Insurance	4	1	1	9
Wild Bill's	3	3	0	6
Matt Smith	2	2	1	5
Marine Tech	2	4	0	4
Hardt Eye	0	5	0	0

BUDWEISER SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Men's Division

Freedom Air	3	0
DCCA	3	0
Legislature	3	0
Beach Boys	3	0
CPA	3	0
Law & Order	2	1
Joeten Motors	2	1
DLNR	2	1
Saipan Cell	1	2
No Zone	2	2
POI	2	2
P & S	1	2
PSS	1	2
CUC	1	2
DEQ/CRM	1	2
Customs	1	2
CHC	1	3
PIC	0	3
Hopwood	0	3
Mayors	0	4

Women's Division

NMC	2	0
DCCA	2	1
Finance	2	2
CHC	1	2
CUC	0	2

2008 NMA All Schools Cross Country Championship

Photos by ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Participants in the 2008 NMA All Schools Cross Country Championship sprint from the starting line at the Airport Field Saturday.

Angelo Jones of SIS crosses the finish line in the 1,500m race.

The MHS Lady Dolphins pose for a group photo after claiming the championship in the girls' 18-and-under division. Joining them is NMA secretary general Robin Sapong, right.

Boys' 14-and-under champion Hopwood Junior High School.

Club Aces' Angelo Jones, Lucas Nutting, and Clay McCullough-Stearns.

Saipan Community School runners pose with their trophies and medals.

Whispering Palms runners, from left, John Auther, Kenyon Schultz, and Danny Auther holding the championship trophy in the boys' 10-and-under division.

SIS' Jordan Butcher nears the finish line in the boys' 10-and-under 1,500m race.

Tammy Ackerman of SCS finishes first in the girls' 8-and-under race.

Neghar Rastguiy of Whispering Palms finishes second in the girls' 10-and-under race.

Finance ends slum in softball league

Finance returned to its winning ways after thumping the Commonwealth Health Center, 17-12, in the women's division of the Budweiser 2008 Inter-Government/ Business Softball League Monday night at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Red Sox Pedroia easily wins AL MVP award

Dustin Pedroia could easily be mistaken for a mechanic, carpenter or plumber, most anything except a major leaguer. "I'm not the biggest guy in the world. I don't have that many tools," he said.

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Nine sports eye 2010 Palau Micronesian Games

MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The CNMI will be well represented in the 2010 Micronesian Games after nine sports federations signified their plans of sending teams to the quadrennial event in Palau.

In a Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association meeting earlier this month, its president Michael White reported that six organizations have already submitted their intent in writing that they wish to take part in the Games, with three more sports verbally committing.

"We have heard from athletics, spearfishing, tennis, swimming, baseball, and basketball. So as far as I'm concerned those are the only sports that are going…" White said.

White

But before the NMASA president was finished with his Palau Micro Games update, Russ Quinn, who sits on both boards of the Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Association and Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association, said that triathlon and volleyball—both indoor and outdoor—will be sending teams to Palau in 2010.

A total of 15 sports will be offered in the 2010 Palau Micronesian Games, including possible gold-medal rich events for the CNMI like baseball, tennis, swimming, and triathlon.

Other sports that the 2010 Palau Micronesian Games Organizing Committee intends to put in the calendar in 2010 are athletics, basketball, Micro All-Around, outrigger canoe, spearfishing, fast-pitch softball, table tennis, weightlifting, beach and indoor volleyball, and wrestling.

According to NMASA ethnic Micronesians, wherever born, can compete for the CNMI if they reside in the islands, and have resided anywhere in Micronesia (Guam, CNMI, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Island, Kiribati, or Nauru) for at least three years up to the start of the Games.

It added that other nationalities, regardless of ethnicity, can compete for the CNMI if they reside in the Commonwealth, and have resided anywhere in Micronesia for at least seven years up to the start of the Games. Temporary absences for school or military service also do not count against the residence requirement.

The CNMI netted the most medals in the 2006 Micro Games which it hosted. Commonwealth teams were able to bring in 35 gold, 33 silver, and

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Badminton team tourney set to fly

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The vastly improved skills of the island's badminton players will be put to the test starting this weekend when the Northern Marianas Badminton Federation holds the Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

This weekend's tournament will be a first for Saipan's shuttlers since they attended a clinic conducted by Oceania Badminton Confederation regional development manager Tony Mordaunt last month.

"A lot of our players have shown significant improvement after attending Tony's clinic. Now it's time to put into practice what they have learned from Tony," tournament committee head Macoi Aguda said.

NMBF president Marconi Calindas added they are looking forward to a balance competition in the tournament, as players, whose skill level are on top of the field, are evenly distributed among the eight participating teams. NMBF also held a draft to select the eight members of each squad.

"This will be an exciting and much competitive tournament," said Calindas, who added that um-

See BADMINTON on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Traders Insurance general manager Ernesto Licop, front row left, hands over a check to NMBF tournament committee head Macoi Aguda, front row right, during a brief press conference for the Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament at Trader's office in San Jose yesterday. Joining Aguda and Licop are Traders employees and NMBF members and officers.

Marianas Medical takes futsal lead

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Marianas Medical Center ended Aon Insurance's winning run in the 2008 NMIFA Women's Futsal Fall League Saturday at the Northern Marianas College Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Wild Bill's Cathy Anderson, second left, nudges an MTI player while trying to steal the ball during their game in the futsal league Saturday at the Northern Marianas College Gymnasium.

MMC and Aon had only four players each for the game, but the latter managed to squeeze out a 6-0 win despite its depleted lineup.

Some of MMC and Aon players failed to report to NMC as they had to go to Hopwood Junior High School to help the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association in organizing the 2008 NMIFA Youth Festival of Football.

The loss was Aon's first in six games, dropping the team to second place in the team standings. Aon cruised to its fourth straight victory, two weeks ago after outclassing Marianas Tech, 2-1. Aon now has a 4-1-1 win-loss-

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Jr. tennis reverts to old age group competition

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The 2008 NMITA Fall Classic Championships marked the return to the old age group competition of junior tennis tournaments in Oceania.

From the 9-and-under and 13-and-under age groups, the Fall Classic reverted to the 10-and-under and 14-and-under divisions, which were used in junior competitions in the region in the past several years until it was changed in 2007.

CNMI coach and Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association vice president Jeff Race said majority of the member-islands of the Oceania Tennis Federations realized that there are more benefits for players in the 10-and-under and 14-and-under than in the 9-and-under and 13-and-under as far as balance of competition and level of skills/physical development are concerned.

"Players in the 14-and-under age group are forced to play in the 18-and-under division, where

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

NMITA vice president and CNMI coach Jeff Race, right, poses with Fall Classic boys' 10-and-under champion Kennedy Isuka, at the stage of the Azucena Hall of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan during the award ceremony for the annual tournament last week. Also in the photo are Lynn Knight, left, of tournament sponsor Tan Holdings Corp. and Kennedy's mother, Vickie.